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A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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POLEMICS & EXCHANGES

On Diversity

To make an urgent point—the corruption of the representation of history in film by the anachronistic distortions of contemporary politics—Roger McGrath, in his fine and well-argued analysis ("Celluloid Nation," March), at the outset and at the end uses language that suggests that he holds non-Christians are un-American, the practice of religions other than Christianity marking a person as unworthy of the blood and heroism of Tarawa. The long prologue to the shank of his essay holds that the Marines were defending their tribe "united by race, language, culture, and religion." And this, he makes explicit, means white and Christian, at least.

Language and culture represent open categories; all of us non-Christians/non-whites speak (or produce children who speak) ordinary, plain American English, and so far as Dr. McGrath means by "culture" the intimacies that we share in everyday life, the ways of walking that mark us, in a crowd of Asians or Europeans, as indelibly American, he is right: All of us walk the same way. But does he really maintain that skin tone defines Americanness? My black American friends have been here for 350 years. They, too, fought and died in all our wars. Does he think that practicing Christianity is a requirement of citizenship? Then Judaism, Buddhism, and Islam, among other religions, should be specified in an amendment to the Constitution as grounds for exclusion. In writing up the amendment, Dr. McGrath might specify which of the many brands of Christianity qualifies, and how he plans to dispose of atheists and (merely) secular persons.

White Protestants of Northern European ancestry do not exercise a monopoly over Americanism or own the heroism of the United States Marines. Without its prologue and epilogue, the shank of Mr. McGrath's essay could have made its perfectly valid point.

—Jacob Neusner
Tampa, FL

Dr. McGrath Replies:

Jacob Neusner raises a number of good points, several of which deserve separate articles. (Editors, please take note.) I suppose much of this can be boiled down to the question: How much diversity can America tolerate and still be America? There is no question that, at the time the Declaration of Independence was signed and the Constitution was framed, an American was white and English-speaking, and a product of Western Christian civilization. Non-whites were not allowed citizenship until Republicans forced through the 14th Amendment in 1868 partly as a way to enfranchise blacks in the South who they thought would then vote for the Grand Old Party. Moreover, whenever non-white immigration reached any significant level, restrictions and prohibitions were enacted, e.g., the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907, and the Oriental Exclusion Act of 1924.

When the Founding Fathers talked about religious freedom, they were essentially thinking of disestablishing the Anglican Church. "Freedom of worship" meant that Baptists, Presbyterians, Quakers, and Catholics should no longer suffer as they had under English rule. I really don't think the Founders were thinking about Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, animists, and Santerians. In Los Angeles, Muslims outnumber Episcopalians. They outnumber Presbyterians. They outnumber Methodists. So, too, do Buddhists. And, according to a report in the *Los Angeles Times*, so, too, do Santerians.

Teachers in the Los Angeles schools receive a pocket calendar from the California Teachers' Association that includes the following highlighted dates for 1998-99: July 7, Mawlid el-Nabi (Prophet Muhammad's birthday); September 20, Ramadan (Muslim holy month); January 19, Shawwal (Muslim holy day); March 28, Thw al-Hijjah (Muslim holy day); April 17, Muharram (Muslim holy day). Hindus and Buddhists score with Diwali (festival of lights) in November and Buddha's Birth, Enlightenment, and Death Commemoration on May 22. In the bad old days, when I was in the Los Angeles schools, we had Christmas and Easter.

What if America is five or ten percent non-white, non-English-speaking, non-Christian, non-Western? No problem.

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A little salt and pepper is interesting, enlivens and invigorates culture, and introduces new perspectives. But what if that number becomes 40, 60, 80 percent of the population? Still no problem? No, I think it is called fragmentation, separation, Balkanization. Los Angeles is an outstanding example of this. While politicians, school officials, and other so-called community leaders mouth inane slogans such as "Our Diversity Is Our Strength," whites flee to far-flung suburbs as fast as their SUV's will carry them. Ever wonder where all the whites in southern Orange County or eastern Ventura County came from?

There are so few whites left in the Los Angeles Unified School District that busing only means that blacks and Hispanics are bused to schools in white neighborhoods. All the white children whose parents can afford it are in private or parochial schools, leaving the local school no more than 20 or 30 percent white. As a whole, the district is now less than 15 percent white. In 1960, before busing and uncontrolled immigration, it was 85 percent white. Schools were overcrowded, on double session, and exploding with children. Take a look at those same schools today. In most of the elementary schools, English is a foreign language.

It seems to me that it is perfectly natural, moral, ethical, and legal for a people to want to preserve their identity. Would Japanese allow themselves to become Russian? Would Israelis allow themselves to become Arab? Would Indians allow themselves to become Chinese? Why should it be our fate to lose our American identity? Moreover, most of the changes I cite in California (Los Angeles, in particular) have come about only since 1965. This need not have happened. No, I don't think this is what Col. David Shoup, Lt. William Deane Hawkins, S. Sgt. William Bordelon, Lt. Alexander Bonnyman, Maj. Michael P. Ryan, Cpl. John J. Spillane, and the other heroes of Tarawa fought for. I might add that three chaplains—Wyeth Willard, F.W. Kelly, and J.V.E. Loughlin—were decorated for their bravery at Tarawa. Not a Muslim, Hindu, or Buddhist among them. If anyone wants to know what the Americans looked like who stormed ashore at Tarawa, simply view the documentary, *With the Marines at Tarawa*. The color combat footage is the best ever shot. Take a close look at the faces of the Marines as they mob Ensign W.W. Kelly after he lands his Hellcat on Tarawa and as they leave the island. Those are the lads. God bless you, boys.

CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS

THE NATO AIR STRIKES against the Republic of Yugoslavia have suddenly precipitated us 60 years back. We find ourselves faced with events which strangely resemble the aggression directed by Germany, first against Czechoslovakia, then, with the aid of the Soviet Union, against Poland. It was striking to hear President Bill Clinton compare his "essentially humanitarian" action in Yugoslavia to the solitary resistance of Winston Churchill and Great Britain in 1940 to the conjoined alliance of Nazi and communist totalitarianism. In fact, today we are dealing with aggression on the part of the United States and their allies against a sovereign nation which, while at peace with its neighbors, has to face a violent interior revolt. For those whose memory is short, the alliance that so quickly routed Poland in 1939 united Nazi German totalitarianism with Russian communist totalitarianism in a single will to continental hegemony.

President Clinton is playing precisely the role that Adolf Hitler played in 1939, and his country, the United States of America, now plays the part of Nazi Germany. But the will to hegemony is no longer local, continental, and European; it has taken on worldwide, universal, total dimensions.

The resemblances between the aggression programmed by NATO against the Yugoslav Republic and both that of Germany against Czechoslovakia and of the Russo-German alliance against Poland are striking: the same confidence in brute force; the same disdain for legal obligations and restrictions; the same disdain for international institutions and for the law of nations, a precise law replaced by the universalization of the rights of man, open to every abuse and pretext; the same will to geopolitical hegemony; the same preparation, the same ideological justification of a pure aggression by propaganda campaigns; the same utilization of ethnic (nationalist) demands in order to intervene in the affairs of an independent state at peace with all its neighbors.

But the differences are equally striking: the will to power (hegemony) of NATO is no longer merely continental, but worldwide; the ability of any state to resist the American and European politics of utilizing apparently irresistible brute force to resolve problems of international politics is virtually non-existent. By contrast, in 1939, an important part of the world's nations were in a position to resist Nazi-communist aggression.

Today's means of propaganda are infinitely more sophisticated and effective than those at the disposal of Goebbels and the Comintern at the time. The ideology spread by this propaganda is no longer that of race or of class, but a new religion, the moralizing humanism of the Rights of Man, a religion that seeks to defend the pretended universal rights of an abstract and global man. The ideology behind which the violence of the NATO forces hides is moralizing and pantheistic. This moralizing and religious screen makes it much more difficult today than 60 years ago to offer any resistance to the social and political propaganda of the totalitarian ideologies of the day. The speeches of the chiefs of state trying to justify this exercise of brute force have a fundamentally religious character. We are evidently dealing with a new war of religion, and this time it is carried on in the name of the new god: Man.

Finally, the world economy today is in an extremely precarious condition, menaced as it is by the threat of the deflation of the enormous speculative financial bubble which is nourishing American prosperity in a perfectly artificial manner.

Today, with Serbia's refusal to surrender to the aggression of a West that refused to understand her, we see ourselves faced with one of the last possibilities of resistance by a state to the project of a totalitarianism claiming world power, the brutal action of which we see unrolling across our continent. It is at least strange to be obliged to affirm that the last bastions of liberty in the world depend for their survival on the ca-

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pacity of Russia and China to resist the madness of world domination of the American-European alliance.

We must incessantly affirm and repeat this: The resistance of the entire Serbian people to the bloody aggression of a West united in a murderous and destructive madness appears to be one of the last chances open to nations to preserve even a semblance of political liberty. After an independent South Africa has been forced to its knees, making it a Marxist satellite of the United States, and after the government and most of the political class of the Swiss Confederation has been reduced to the level of valets of international power, it is now the turn of the Republic of Yugoslavia to pay the price of its pretension still to exercise its national sovereignty. But we shall see how difficult it is to reduce to nonexistence a people that prefers death to slavery.

That which had to happen has happened. Years of media calumnies seeking to demonize Serbia have attained their goal. Woe to every nation that will dare to oppose even the least scrap of resistance to the wills of the bestial empire (the Beast, Revelation 13) which has today become American. Despite its faults and its undeniable sins (but is it alone in this?), the Serbian people and their president have known how to remain faithful to their history, preferring, as so often in the past, sacrifice to dishonor and to cowardice. This people is thus becoming, by an unprecedented divine grace, the revealer of this limitless iniquity that has conquered the whole West.

Now with the public evil installed in the sight of all at the highest level of the American state, largely approved by the nation, openly endorsed by the Pope himself, and legally whitewashed by the Senate, it is evident today that the protective hand of God, which was still holding back the power of darkness from totally submerging a West that has gone astray, has been withdrawn.

In this tragic situation there remains one single consolation for us Swiss: In spite of the world-embracing politics of our rulers, we are not yet, thank God, officially taking part in this bloody farce. Today, as in 1939, we must hope for the total confusion of the nations that, under the mask of the most beautiful humanitarian sentiments, are animated by a brutal and limitless will to power. Let us pray God that He may reduce to nonexistent the shameless actions of a once-Christian West, which, in its apostasy and to its loss, has become the dwelling place of an incredibly perverse political spirit.

—Jean-Marc Berthoud

WARS, according to the one-dimensional view of world history favored by Bill Clinton and Madeleine Albright, are caused by bad or mad men. Once we, the almighty, self-appointed arbiters of worldwide justice, determine who the bad guys are, we can go in, blow them away, and make the world safe for democracy. This approach is founded on fantasy and doomed to endless failure; its false premise guarantees more suffering for the populations of the world. The tragedy in Kosovo is simply the latest example.

The causes of wars are indeed complex, but some underlying forces are nearly universal throughout history and across the globe. Massive shifts in populations create unstable situations in which one group fears domination by another group. Fear—whether of the loss of power, of territory, of cultural expression, of the means of sustenance, or of religious predominance—incites reaction which, if not dissipated or checked, results in a self-protective assertiveness, often violent and brutal.

These demographic shifts, measured in historical terms, can be destabilizing and threatening to peace even if they occur over two or three generations. In the case of invasions, like the Mongols overrunning Europe, such shifts can happen suddenly. In the case of migrations, they happen more gradually. Demographic shifts can also be caused by discrepancies in fertility rates between neighboring communities. Bad or mad men do not create these situations: They are created by the normal competition of human societies for space and resources.

While the West does all it can to alleviate the suffering of the Kosovo Albanians and seeks an emergency solution to a nearly intractable problem, we should be casting a discerning eye around the globe in an effort to anticipate future Kosovos. Sadly for America, the southwestern United States could become a Tex-Mex-style Balkan powder keg in the not-too-distant future.

CNN has broadcast images of tens of thousands of refugees, a sea of displaced humanity. Multiply this picture into the millions, and you begin to approximate the number of economic refugees who are streaming into the southwestern United States from Mexico and Central America. Again, there are no good guys or bad guys here, but an indigenous population living above the Rio Grande and a migrating population moving up from the other side. If history is any guide, the groups will eventually come into conflict. The only question is: How will this conflict be managed?

Unlike other migrations into North America over the past 300 years, this one is occurring across a contiguous border, creating a novel situation. Hispanics are entering the United States in much greater numbers than any other ethnic group has since the British colonized the eastern seaboard in the 17th and 18th centuries. Moreover, they are able to move back and forth across the common border in a way no other immigrant group in American history could do. This natural fact of geography is further complicated by historical claims—until 1846, what is now the Southwest United States was the northern part of Mexico—and governmental policies that support bilingual education, officially sanction dual citizenship, grant permission to vote in the elections of both countries, and offer federal assistance to non-citizens.

Whether this territory should belong to the English-speaking Europeans who conquered from the north or the Spanish-speaking Europeans who conquered from the south is almost a moot point. Over the next 20 years, according to projections based on current rates of legal and illegal immigration as well as sharply contrasting fertility rates and so-called "white flight" to the Pacific Northwest, the migrating population from south of the Rio Grande will become the majority in California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas—the former territory of old Mexico. This raises important questions. How will this affect the peace and tranquillity of the United States? Is this an inevitable development? If this does happen, how can the inherent competition between the resident and migrating populations be managed?

It is not enough simply to say, as our feel-good leadership in Washington would have us believe, that if we just "understand" and "tolerate" one another, everything will be all right. Human history has shown that ignoring the potential conflicts between human societies is a recipe for disaster. The record

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of recent civil strife in Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Chiapas, Mexico, is hardly reassuring. In a Los Angeles school district, celebrations of both *Cinco de Mayo* and Black History Month were canceled recently to avoid potential violence between polarized black and Hispanic students.

Rather than picking a fight in someone else's backyard, we should be looking to our own country and its immediate neighbors, and seeking solutions for the generation now being born—solutions that will spare them the agony of ethnic and sectarian violence or the scourge of civil war. Those who believe that "it can't happen here" should remember that a cataclysmic civil war tore this country apart once already, only 135 years ago, when our population was much more ethnically and culturally homogenous than it is today.

—*Ronald F. Maxwell*

AMERICAN TROOP deployments in Kosovo were the subject of a debate in the House of Representatives on March 11. A resolution authorizing President Clinton to contribute U.S. ground troops to a NATO peacekeeping mission in the troubled province was supported by 219 members, just one more than a majority. While the vote cut across party lines, the White House and most Democrats opposed holding the vote in the midst of negotiations, but the Republican leadership brought the resolution to the floor anyway. Speaker Dennis Hastert (R-IL) voted for it, while Majority Leader Dick Armey (R-TX) and Majority Whip Tom Delay opposed it.

Even more troubling than the possibility of sending American soldiers into an ethno-religious civil war was the misuse of historical argument and analogy used to justify it.

During eight hours of debate, the importance of Kosovo to the Serbian identity was never mentioned. Kosovo was part of the original heartland of Serbia. In 1389, the Muslim Ottoman Turks defeated the Orthodox Serbs' greatest hero, Prince Lazar, at the Field of the Blackbirds on St. Vitus' Day. A number of Serbian nobles had accepted Turkish vassalage, but the prince is revered because he died in battle rather than suffer the dishonor of surrender.

Serbia would not regain its formal independence from the Turks until 1882, but it won autonomy within the Ottoman Empire in 1817 after a series of bloody rebellions. The Turks were driven back in a series of wars culminating in World War I, and Serbia regained control of Kosovo by war in 1912.

Imagine that a San Antonio Liberation Front were to champion—by armed violence—Mexican-American rights north of the border, demand autonomy for the Texas city that is home to the Alamo, and plan for the eventual return of the area to Mexico. Would U.S. authorities have the right to oppose such a movement? Would Texans be indifferent if the Alamo, the symbol of their independence from Mexico, were returned to Mexico? Would the Organization of American States be justified in sending a peacekeeping force of Latin American troops, openly supportive of Mexican claims, into Texas? Would Americans welcome or resist such a foreign intervention?

This obvious historical analogy was never mentioned in the House debate. Instead, attention focused mainly on World War I, proving the old adage that a little knowledge can be a dangerous thing. Thus Rep. Ike Skelton (D-MO): "First, we should understand those pages of history that point out that World War I started in the Balkans and if NATO in its role in keeping peace in Europe can be fulfilled, it will be necessary for NATO to do a peacekeeping mission in Kosovo." Of course, NATO was formed to *defend* its member states from attack, not to keep the peace in other parts of Europe. Beyond this new (and largely unexamined) definition of the alliance floated the specter of Kosovo as the breeding ground of a new world war.

Rep. Tom Lantos (D-CA) made this explicit: "I am sick and tired of my colleagues saying this is in Europe, let the Europeans deal with it. Sarajevo was in Europe. That was the genesis of the First World War. Czechoslovakia was in Europe. That was the genesis of the Second World War. These people who never learn, who are uneducable cannot carry the day today." Yet the Europe of 1999 is not the Europe of 1914 or 1938. In 1914, Europe was divided into two heavily armed coalitions: the Triple Entente and the Central Powers. When a Serbian nationalist assassinated the heir to the Austrian throne, the spark fell on a mountain of gunpowder that had already been amassed.

These once-great powers are not looking for an excuse to settle their differences on the field of battle today. Indeed, without American prompting, they would probably ignore Kosovo, except for humanitarian aid and pious speechmaking from a safe distance.

In 1938, the most powerful state in Europe was on the march, and Czechoslovakia was in its path. While many have attempted to cast Serbia in the role of a "fascist aggressor" in the Balkans and to conjure up the image of the Nazis, the geopolitical differences are profound and fundamental. Serbia has neither the resources nor the ambition to conquer new lands; in fact, the opposite has happened as Yugoslavia has disintegrated. Serbia has been fighting on the defensive, trying to *maintain* as large a homeland for its people as possible. The struggle in Bosnia was about protecting the right of Bosnian Serbs to associate with their ethnic brothers in Serbia and to be freed from living under the heel of their ancient enemies, the Bosnian Muslims.

Though supposedly on a peacekeeping mission to end the civil war in Bosnia, U.S. and NATO troops remain there, four years after the Dayton peace agreement, in order to force the Muslims, Croats, and Serbs into a "single Bosnian state" ruled from the Muslim stronghold of Sarajevo. That the Serbs are to be denied self-determination was explicitly acknowledged by Assistant Secretary of State John Kornblum just before the 1996 Bosnian elections. Referring to the Republika Srpska (the Serbian zone in Bosnia), he stated, "There simply is no real future for that little jagged piece of territory if it is not integrated into Bosnia." The Clinton administration has sought to cripple Srpska. Besides trying to disarm the Serbs while arming the Muslims, NATO has seized Srpska government offices and newspapers and deployed high-tech aircraft to jam Serbian radio broadcasts.

Is it any wonder that Serbia resisted the installation of another NATO army on its national territory, this one to "defend" the Kosovo Albanian Muslims? Rather than containing a rising major power, the United States and NATO are carving up a small country in decline. Rep. Robert Menendez (D-NJ) argued, "If we are the leaders of the free world, if we are still that brave nation that stood against darkness in World War II, now is the time to stand together to help the people of Kosovo." But why is it just to detach a piece of Serbia because the leaders of its Albanian majority desire it,

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while not allowing the Serbian majority in the Republika Srpska to withdraw from Bosnia?

The Serbs have been characterized as "bullies" due to the "ethnic cleansing" that accompanied their actions in the Bosnian civil war. During the March debate, Rep. Tom Bliley (R-VA) declared, "Remember, we hesitated and did not go into Bosnia right away. We were treated every night to the atrocities on CNN." One can only wonder how many of our scarce Army divisions would be scattered across Africa if CNN camera crews felt as comfortable operating in Rwanda, the Congo, or along the Ethiopian-Eritrean border as they do in the Balkans. (The same day Congress was debating Kosovo, the Ethiopian military assaulted the Eritrean enclave at Baduma with armored and air forces; without media coverage, however, the battle's perceived impact on the outside world was no greater than its actual impact.)

Throughout the debate, House members seemed uncertain whether to brand the Serbs as fascists or communists. Shifting from the world wars to the Cold War, Rep. Sam Gejdenson (D-CT) argued for unlimited intervention as an extension of NATO's traditional role. "[F]or all the talk of an end game, if we had had the discussion when we put NATO forces in Europe to stop Communist expansion, and said, how long are you going to be there, are you going to be out of there in two years, out in a year, we would have lost Europe." Will the "loss" of Kosovo today mean the loss of Europe tomorrow? And, if so, to whom?

In one of the strangest presentations of the day, Rep. Jim Moran (D-VA) seemed unsure whom we were opposing during the Cold War: "[T]he reason Europe is stable today is that we invested after World War II to make sure that it would not come apart; that it would not be taken over by fascists. We did that through the Marshall Plan." Talk about seeing no enemies to the left!

Moran then employed the domino theory. "If we do not do the right thing in Kosovo today, tomorrow it will be some place else because other bullies around the world will be empowered by Milosevic's success in Kosovo." But when the issue was the 1991 House resolution authorizing American troops to drive Iraq out of Kuwait, reversing a true act of aggression, Moran voted "no" after attending an anti-war rally.

Alexander Hamilton argued against trusting the House to conduct foreign policy, writing that "accurate and comprehensive knowledge of foreign politics; a steady and systematic adherence to the same views, a nice and uniform sensibility to national character . . . are incompatible with the genius of a body so variable and numerous." However, before the debate over Kosovo is cited as proof of the superiority of Hamilton's preference for executive supremacy in international affairs, it should be remembered that the abuses of history chronicled above were committed in support of a policy formulated by the White House on the same suspect principles.

—*W. Robert Hawkins*

THE "KOSOVO STANDARD" may be the unseen danger in the U.S./NATO military intervention in support of the KLA and, presumably, in favor of their political ambitions. White House spokesman Joe Lockhart has confessed that the alliance is fighting for the "autonomy and self-government of the Kosovo Albanians." In other words, the United States and its NATO allies are supporting a Kosovo secession movement. This is the "Kosovo Standard," and ethnic minorities everywhere that aspire to be free from the fetters of the modern unitary nation-state must be celebrating in anticipation of this alliance coming to their rescue just as soon as fighting subsides in the Balkans.

If the U.S. government (more precisely, the American Empire) operated consistently on principle rather than expediency, it would be worried about establishing a precedent for the Kosovo Standard. Suppose that the American Southwest (including Southern California) becomes predominantly Hispanic early in the next century. The Aztlan Liberation Army (ALA), in an attempt to break off territory in order to form an independent Hispanic state or to bring about a *reconquista* on behalf of Mexico, engages in terrorist activity against federal and state authorities and attacks non-Hispanic civilians.

The ALA's pretext? "Human rights violations" by the United States against Mexican-Americans. The U.S. Border Patrol and National Guard units from Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California take the field against the ALA to thwart Hispanic territorial ambitions. Pleas for action against "Anglo racism" are picked up and parroted by the international media. Videotape footage of Yankee brutality along the border dominates the airwaves, and La Raza undertakes a massive propaganda campaign for intervention against the Anglos. Washington is accused of "ethnic cleansing" as American forces succeed in driving ALA fighters toward the Mexican border. Streams of pitiful Hispanic refugees follow them southward, choking the dusty roads leading to Tijuana, Juárez, and Matamoros. The BBC conducts interviews at border checkpoints across the Rio Grande, soliciting tales of horror and brutality.

Remembering the "Kosovo Standard" of 1999, Third World nations petition NATO to act to prevent an "humanitarian disaster." NATO officials balk at the request. But how will they wriggle out of this one? All the preconditions for a "Kosovo Standard" military action have been met. Must the air strikes begin in order to "degrade" America's military capabilities? Should the Hague Tribunal brand the American president a "war criminal" and call for his immediate arrest? How long will it take before Tony Blair calls him a "bush-league Milosevic" and CNN begins broadcasting pictures of "the worst humanitarian disaster since Kosovo"?

Of course, a wise and prudent administration would never have let itself be sucked into such a sticky situation in the first place. Simply put, it's not America's place to run the world. Hubris always exacts its price; pride goeth before a fall. What will the leaders of the American regime do when they find themselves playing the role of the Serbs in some not-too-distant future, trying to keep their own multicultural and multiethnic empire in order, and one of their ethnic minorities reminds the world of the Kosovo Standard? Just something for our imperial masters to think about—between bombing runs.

—*Michael Hill*

POLITICS, they say, makes strange bedfellows, but that's nothing compared to constitutional amendment. A few weeks ago, I found myself testifying before the Constitution Subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee, and on the panel with me, testifying in favor of the Flag Protection Amendment, were a former Miss America, a holocaust survivor, an African-American bishop, and a major general (the president of the Con-

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gressional Medal of Honor Society, no less).

All of us were trying to convince two-thirds of the House to approve an addition to the Constitution stating that "Congress shall have the power to prohibit the physical desecration of the Flag of the United States." The amendment has the support of 80 percent of the American people, it has been requested by 49 of the state legislatures, and it would pass in a heartbeat, if it ever got out of Congress. The requisite three-quarters of the state legislatures would approve it, and it would become the 28th Amendment. The House of Representatives has already passed the amendment twice by the necessary two-thirds vote, but it failed by three votes in the Senate two years ago, and the Democratic leadership prevented it from reaching the Senate floor for a vote last year.

It's a small amendment, but, to paraphrase Daniel Webster, there are those who love it. There are also those who hate it. It has been virulently damned by virtually the entire media and the entire professoriat, who see it as a threat to the First Amendment. Opponents take the same position as did the Supreme Court in the dubious *Texas* v. *Johnson* case of 1989, when, by a bare five-to-four majority, it ruled for the first time in our history that burning the flag was speech protected by the First Amendment, and struck down all laws banning flag desecration. Congress tried to draft a statute to meet the objections of the Court, but the federal law was struck down a year later. The Court then made clear that no statute could prohibit flag desecration since, in its view, the flag stood for the right to burn it.

Texas v. *Johnson* represents the jurisprudence of self-actualization run amuck, and it is of some significance that even Earl Warren and Hugo Black—perhaps the greatest liberal and the greatest First Amendment absolutist ever to sit on the Court—both believed that there was an easy distinction to be made between flag desecration and speech. All the Flag Protection Amendment seeks to do is to overrule *Texas* v. *Johnson* and return to the jurisprudence of Warren, Black, and 100 years of constitutional precedent, but its opponents see the amendment as a dagger striking at the heart of free speech.

It's widely believed in the media that the amendment is an invention of unscrupulous politicians who think they can score cheap points by wrapping themselves in Old Glory. Curiously, the truth is exactly the opposite. It takes a considerable amount of courage for a politician to support the amendment because the media happily crucifies anyone who seeks to protect the flag, immediately tarring him or her as an enemy of free speech. Since politicians live and die by favorable press, it takes all the persuasive powers that a panel such as the one I was on can muster to keep congressional support for the amendment alive.

Even more important is the persistence of the grassroots movement, particularly of roughly 150 veterans' groups and service organizations who have joined in the Citizens Flag Alliance, who have tirelessly advocated the amendment for ten years, and who assembled the panel.

The amendment is an important front in the nation's ongoing culture war. The forces of tradition, virtue, and morality, which have enlisted on its side, suffered a crushing defeat in the Senate trial of the Clinton impeachment charges, and they are hoping to regain some lost ground. Those who back the amendment seek to remind us that responsibilities are as important as rights, and they believe that the people have a right to express this principle by protecting their flag. Those who oppose the amendment fight for the notion that individual free expression is what America is all about, that nothing should be officially sacred, and that we should glory in the fact that we allow our most precious symbol to be trashed with impunity.

There have been about 50 acts of flag desecration since the *Johnson* decision; the most dramatic—an act of defecating on the flag—was recently ruled by the Wisconsin Supreme Court (following *Texas* v. *Johnson*) to be speech protected by the First Amendment. When the flag has officially been declared a permissible rumpswab, it would seem something has gone very wrong.

My own view (and, I would think, the view of Burkean traditionalists) is that the Flag Protection Amendment ought to be supported because of its implicit acknowledgment that duty and deference are the foundation of any society, and that liberty unchecked too quickly becomes license. There are those who support the amendment, however, simply on the basis that, if that's what the people want, then that's what they should have, and there's surely something to that. Though one lesson of the Clinton presidency is that we must guard against demagoguery and poll-driven policy, the fact remains that popular sovereignty *is* the basis of our society. The Constitution begins with the words, "We the People," but too many of the people now feel as if they have lost the Constitution to a Supreme Court bent on rewriting it. The Flag Protection Amendment, in sending a shot across the bow of the Supreme Court (as one brave law professor at the University of Texas put it), might remind the Court who really is supposed to be governing in this Republic. If that's what Miss America, the general, the bishop, the survivor, I, and 80 percent of the American people want, shouldn't we have it?

—*Stephen B. Presser*

OBITER DICTA: In the February 1999 installment of *Signs of the Times*, a quotation is attributed to a *60 Minutes* interview with Janet Reno. Since publication, we have learned that the attorney general did not appear on *60 Minutes* on the date in question and have been unable to determine whether she, in fact, is the source of the quotation. A number of explanations for the quotation have been advanced; since we are unable to verify any of them, we will not speculate any further about its accuracy. We regret any error and any inconvenience to our readers, and we thank all of those who have assisted us in attempting to determine the source of this quotation.

Gregory L. Newbold, our artist this month, hails from Salt Lake City, Utah. Mr. Newbold's clients have included Sony/Tri Star Pictures, Hewlett Packard, Cadillac, and the Houston Grand Opera. He has illustrated two children's books, and his paintings appear on every jar of Mountain Sun Natural Juices. His work has been recognized by the Society of Illustrators and the American Institute of Graphic Arts, among others.

Two poets grace our pages this month. **Richard Moore**, from Belmont, Massachusetts, is the author of nine books of poetry, as well as translations of Plautus and Euripides, a book of literary essays, and a novel, *The Investigator*. Mr. Moore gives frequent readings in the Boston area. Our second poet this month is **Constance Rowell Mastores** of Oakland, California. Her poetry has appeared in the *Lyric*, *Press*, *Blue Unicorn*, *Boulevard*, and *Artweek*, among others.

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H. Ward Sterett

The Only Game in Town

by Thomas Fleming

My father often told me the story of how he, as a small boy, had sat on the knee of Wyatt Earp. The former marshall of Dodge and Tombstone, as an old man, came to Chicago to give a lecture. He had heard of my Great-Uncle Garret's heroism in rescuing a lady from an armed terrorist and expressed a desire to meet the kind of lawman he admired. Having no children of his own, Garret brought along his brother and his son, who got to sit on the hero's knee. My father loved the West and in retirement spent some years in Del Rio—a decision that bewilders even most Texans. Among the earliest "grown-up" books I recall reading was Stuart N. Lake's biography of Earp—which, at times, reads more like a film star's "as-told-to" autobiography—and I never missed an episode of *The Life and Legend of Wyatt Earp*, the Hugh O'Brien TV show, "based loosely" on the book.

My father, although an Earp admirer, cautioned me that there was a little more legend and less life not only in the program but also in the biography. Although Wyatt preferred ice cream to redeye, the Earps were not exactly the milk-and-water Methodists portrayed on television. They made their money from gambling, invested in saloons, and contracted common-law marriages with women whose virtue was not at all dubious. "The fighting Earps," their admirers called them. Others, less respectful, dubbed them "the fighting pimps."

Wyatt had a particularly checkered career: He skipped bail on a charge of horse-stealing, and he showed little reluctance about hanging out with notorious characters like Doc Holliday. If Ike Clanton were to be believed (note the subjunctive), the Earps' feud with the Clantons, celebrated in a hundred fact-ignoring films, began in a joint-venture robbery of a stagecoach in which both the driver and a passenger were murdered. While it may be safe to dismiss Ike's claim that Doc Holliday suspected Ike of ratting out the highly vindictive dentist, Wyatt's friendly relations with a variety of lowlifes did not enhance his reputation, and perhaps more than rumor gave Holliday the credit for the stagecoach murders.

There were even two sides, my father cautioned, to the Gunfight at the O.K. Corral, and, depending on whether you follow the case in the *Epitaph* or in the *Nugget*, the Earps were either righteous defenders of law and order or cold-blooded killers. I have often thought that a director could have fun making a movie from the Clantons' point of view: just a bunch of good-timing cowhands who were persecuted by a courthouse ring of Republican gamblers who speculated at the faro table instead of on Wall Street. It would be a lie, but no worse than the frighteningly bad film that miscasts Burt Lancaster as Wyatt and Victor Mature as Doc or John Ford's better but even less accurate movie, *My Darling Clementine*, which tried to pass off Henry Fonda as Wyatt and took Ford's principle of "print the legend" to a new high.

If you confine your reading to Wyatt's hagiography, which goes back to the *Tombstone Epitaph*, you will not discover that two of the cowboys—Tom McLaury and Ike Clanton—may have been unarmed, nor that the conflict had political as well as personal roots. In part, the feud between the Earps and their enemies was a product of post-war sectional conflict (as Richard Maxwell Brown argues in a recent book). Many of the cowboys were from Texas or Missouri, Confederate sympathizers, and Democrats; the Earps were good Republicans, and Wyatt's older brother Virgil fought for the Union.

The Clantons and McLaurys, the fun-loving Curly Bill Brocius and the book-reading John Ringo were all wild bucks living on one side or another of the law but almost always outside civilization. Quiet, churchgoing people occasionally became

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annoyed with the cowboys' habit of hurrahing their way through town, shooting up bottles at the back of the bar, the heels off boots, and cigars out of mouths, but as Billy Breakenridge (Sheriff John Behan's deputy) was to say years later, Tombstone (apart from cattle-rustling) was "an orderly and law-abiding town," adding,

> What little killing was done there was done among the lawless element themselves. This element was very much in the minority, and during the five years I lived there I never heard of a house being robbed or anyone held up in the city, and it was perfectly safe for any lady or gentleman to pass along the streets, day or night, without being molested.

The cowboys may have stolen a few cows and killed a few people, but Breakenridge, who deputized some of them as tax collectors, said he was well treated by these roughnecks: "I never want to travel with a better companion than Curly Bill. . . . I learned one thing with him, and that was that he would not lie to me. What he told me he believed, and his word to me was better than the oaths of some of whom were known as good citizens."

On the other hand, the Earps (whom Breakenridge's crack may be aimed at) supported the law-and-order commercial civilization of the Gilded Age, even when they deliberately defied the law—as they did when they shot Ike Clanton in the street not long after the murder of Morgan Earp.

Like most entrepreneurs—gambling is, after all, a kind of business now, and there is a revenue side to holding a monopoly on violence—the Earps were desperate to make their way in the world. Despite Wyatt's loyalty to Holliday, they sided with public order; they were progressive and knew that the frontier would someday be tamed. Tombstone was the ground floor, and they were determined to cash in on their courage and on their connections: John Clum, both mayor and the *Epitaph*'s editor, supported them. However, compared with suburban American sports fans of my own generation, Wyatt and Curly Bill were two peas in a pod: Both were resolute in the face of danger, loyal to their friends, and determined to take revenge upon an enemy. Accept most of the attacks on his character at face value, and Wyatt Earp is still, as the TV theme song described him, "brave, courageous, and bold." He was also a very dangerous man.

According to reliable sources, Virgil Earp was playing poker with Tom McLaury and Ike Clanton in the wee hours of the morning, the very day of the showdown. Virgil had the coolest head of the brothers, but this little pre-battle game—anything but friendly—underscores the importance of gambling in a frontier society. Everybody in the West seems to have spent most of his free time gambling. Indians played games like "button button" and bet everything they had; Mexicans were so good at Spanish monte that Ben Thompson—as famous for his gunplay as for his gambling—banned them from the "Americans only" monte banks he set up along the Rio Grande. At Eagle Pass, where he had skinned all the gringos, Thompson had the bad judgment to break his own rule, and, as he recalled later,

> In less than five hours I did not have a cent. I even put up my silver spurs and gold cord that ornamented my hat. It was of no use, money, spurs, hat, cord, and all went, and the cigarette-smoking devils grinned as they won. A picked chicken, a scalded cat, a Georgia major, each was better fitted to walk abroad than I was.

But it was the miners and cowboys who set the tone. After working like the devil for months, they would blow everything they had on the turn of a marked card. While the law-and-order element moving into Tombstone or San Francisco might frown upon the reckless ways of the gamblers and the occasional vigilance committee might have to drive the bad elements out of town (as in Bret Harte's masterpiece, "The Outcasts of Poker Flats"), gambling was good for business, not only the businesses in which most frontier towns specialized—whiskey and women—but also groceries, hardware, and supplies. What self-respecting miner would bring his gold to a town that refused to supply him with the necessities of life or offer him the thrill of being fleeced?

In truth, gambling must have been the quintessential frontier experience. Quiet and steady men do not leave their homes in Watertown, Wisconsin (as Billy Breakenridge did) to seek an uncertain future in the mines of Colorado or on the open ranges of Arizona. And men who come from a line of quiet and steady ancestors would probably never have found themselves in the New World. Much has been written, most of it wrong, about American exceptionalism, but on one point the America-boosters were right: Neither the adventurers who accompanied John Smith to Virginia nor the religious fanatics who settled Massachusetts were placid or timid men, and the best of the later immigrants were not the hapless cattle-boat starvelings celebrated on the Statue of Equality: They wanted land and were willing to take high-risk jobs in the mines to build up a stake.

One of the most improbable immigrants was Vaso "Chuck" Chuckovich, a Serbian merchant sailor from Dalmatia who jumped ship in California not knowing a word of English. He lost his teeth working with mercury in a gold refinery before teaming up in Denver with gambling legend Ed Chase. Chuckovich managed to save enough of his casino profits to send $1.25 million back to the government of Dalmatia. When Yugoslavia was formed after World War I, this money was a principle stake of its treasury.

In the old America, the reckless and high-rolling Vaso Chuckovich could fit right in. Only a Scandinavian socialist could conceive of a risk-free life without gagging, and if gambling can disrupt lives and warp characters, that is not because betting is inherently evil—as Puritans argue—any more than wine or erotic desire is evil. It is civilization that teaches a man to domesticate his erotic impulses with a marriage vow and to channel his gambling instincts into business investments or a friendly wager on the Super Bowl.

Gambling obviously has its dangerous side, but most good people like to gamble: Business depends on the risk-taking investor, whether he is a venture capitalist or someone who buys a hundred shares of Dell Computer. Farmers are the biggest gamblers, and they bet every year against the weather and against the markets. Anyone who has married and had children is taking a big gamble, and the odds are not necessarily in his favor.

These adventures in risk-taking—playing poker with friends or taking your life's savings out of the bank and starting a dry-cleaning business—are at best creative and at worst fairly harm-

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less. They are also private and, in the case of the poker game, not always legal. There may have been plenty of cases of good family men who bet and lost the ranch to a crooked dealer—a plot staple of "B" Westerns—but perhaps more typical were the single men who plunged and lost and went back to work only to plunge again.

The gambler's mentality was best expressed in an anecdote that made Canada Bill Jones one of my father's heroes. Described by his friends as a "chicken-headed" little geek with an idiotic expression, Canada Bill had a deft hand for fleecing the suckers at three card monte. Unfortunately, he was not much of a hand at faro. He was losing steadily one night when a friend pointed out to him that the game was crooked: I know, replied Bill, "but it's the only game in town." Nobody made him squander his ill-gotten gains, and no government billboards encouraged people like Canada Bill to regard a lottery ticket as an investment.

Men will always waste money on pleasures, and a sportsman who is serious about hunting or fishing may spend more money on his toys than the poor fish who buys lottery tickets. But sport is something active and social; it is good for the body, trains the senses, and it lures the sportsman outdoors and away from the TV. What does a lottery ticket do, except trick the working poor into paying a stupidity tax? Since the odds are much worse than a roulette game in Vegas, no one in his right mind would make a regular habit of purchasing lottery tickets unless there were some hidden appeal.

The commercials make it clear what the message is. The Illinois Lottery pioneered a popular type of commercial in which a bunch of guys are sitting around talking about investments. When one of them asks if they have anything that can pay a million bucks, and explains that the Illinois Lottery does, the advocates of CDs and mutual funds are crest-fallen. The message is clear. The lottery is a less than one-in-a million chance that I can escape from the life I have made. It is a morally dangerous delusion, and the difference between heading West and going to Vegas or playing Lotto is the difference between shooting the rapids and riding a virtual-reality roller coaster. The "quick pick" is a quick fix.

Even 120 years ago, clear-sighted residents of Tombstone could see the end of the frontier coming. Wyatt turned away from the professionals and made an honest woman of Sadie Marcus, John Behan's actress girlfriend. They made a pile of money in Gnome, Alaska, and lived comfortably. Bold men turned from faro games to real-estate speculation, and, after conquering the continent, Americans pursued an imaginary frontier, drumming up adventures in Cuba and the Philippines, in two world wars, and in the global struggle against godless communism. The hard lessons of conquest we learned in subduing the "First Americans" were inevitably applied to our competitors in Europe and Asia, who had to be demonized, reduced to subhuman status, and exterminated in almost risk-free aerial campaigns. Somewhere along the way, we lost their nerve and our humanity. To avenge his brother Morgan's murder, Wyatt Earp killed Ike Clanton on the street and shot Curly Bill in the back. He did not burn down their houses or bomb their wives and children.

If Vaso Chuckovich could only have seen into the future, he might have gone back to the Balkans, where the people are as tough as the Earps and as wild as Curly Bill, but do not murder women and children for humanitarian reasons. Only a really civilized people is capable of such lying and such savagery. c

DICTATIONS

Name Games

"Kosovar" became a watchword in the months leading up to the U.S. attack on Yugoslavia. Although some news-readers continued to speak of the "Albanians of Kosovo," use of the term "Kosovar"—adopted about two years earlier by Albanian nationalists—was the entry ticket to the New American Order's press box. Formerly, these people were called either "Arnauts" (a Turkish-derived term for "Albanian") or "Schipetars," but in Kosovo the nationalists and terrorists insisted on "Albanian" as a word more familiar to Western ears. In coming up with "Kosovar," however, the Albanians were making a specific and far-reaching claim: that they, the immigrant majority, defined this ancient land. Henceforth, the Serbs—who had lived in Kosovo since the seventh century—would be regarded first as interlopers and then, when their police attempted to repress the terrorist uprising, as invaders.

The Albanians probably learned their name game from the Bosnian Muslims, who did not even have the advantage of ethnic or linguistic distinctiveness: They were simply the descendants of Serbs who had denied Christ in order to hang on to their property and privileges. But once these Muslims started calling themselves "Bosniaks," they could delegitimate the non-Muslim majority (made up of Serbs and Croats) and portray themselves as the authentic and aboriginal population. The charm worked on Secretary of State George Schulz, who apparently believed that the Serbs were invading Bosnia and not simply trying to exert political control over the land they owned (over 65 percent).

Muslims did not invent this game. Suppose an English government decides to resettle Lowland Scots in the most troublesome part of the "other island," and suppose that, when the Irish finally rise up to throw off English rule, their former masters were to draw a line through the country and give the people on the Scottish side the right to stay in union with Britain and continue to abuse the Catholics. But why suppose? This is what happened.

The Irish Catholic course of action, at this point, is plain: define themselves as the Ulstermen, demand autonomy for their sections as a stop on the route to independence and union with Ireland, and, when the British government attempts to put down their insurrection, they can ask Bill Clinton to bomb London. We can only hope he gets his accomplices, Mr. Blair and Mr. Robertson. Then he can bomb Austin for refusing to give up San Antonio and Boston if Ted Kennedy refuses to restore Massachusetts to the descendants of Squanto.

—*Humpty Dumpty*

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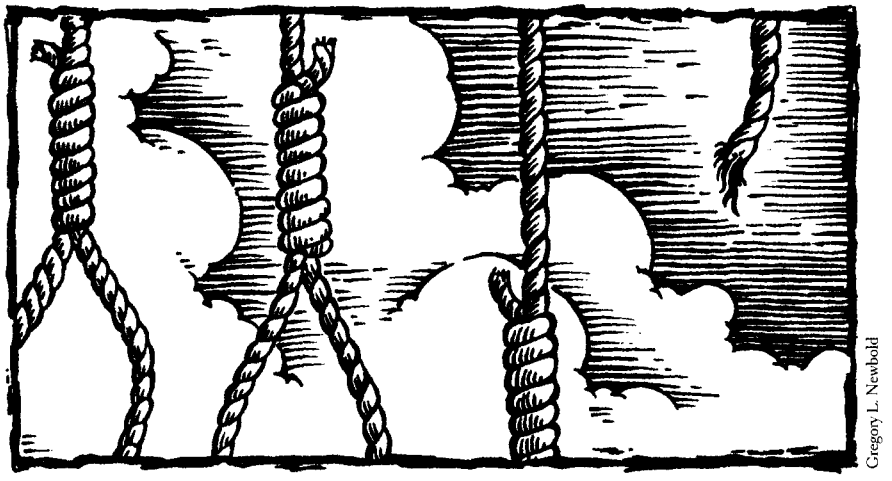
Death Before Dishonor

by Roger D. McGrath



Gregory L. Newbold

The 46-year-old veteran frontiersman lay in bed, desperately ill. He was suffering from the effects of a gunshot wound that he had received in a fight. But duty called. The state legislature asked him if he would lead an army of volunteers to engage the rampaging Red Stick Creeks. Though scarcely able to sit up in bed, he said that he would have the army on the march in nine days. True to his word but looking skeletal and decrepit, he had the volunteers on the road by the promised date. He moved them toward the enemy stronghold at the rate of 20 miles a day. The troops thought surely the Old Man would weaken and die. Instead, he gained strength day by day, his fierce visage and blue eyes burning with an unearthly intensity. He was a commander who inspired his men. He had an iron will and a lean sinewy body to go with it. He did not get his nickname for nothing. Old Hickory was all grit and fight.

The Red Stick faction of Creeks, who were armed by, and allies of, the British in the War of 1812, were about to suffer the wrath of Andrew Jackson and 2,000 Tennessee frontiersmen. In the first engagement of the two forces, a detachment of Jackson's boys killed more than 200 Red Stick warriors. "We shot them like dogs," said a tall, lanky frontiersman in the detachment. The frontiersman was David Crockett. Jackson's force caught up with the main body of Red Sticks a couple of days later. More than a thousand Indian warriors came rushing out of the woods at the Tennessee boys "like a cloud of Egyptian locusts," said Crockett, "and screaming like all the young devils had been turned loose, with the old devil of all at their head." Crockett and his comrades coolly marked their targets, took careful aim, and began firing. Each shot had to count—reloading took 30 seconds. Their firing was disciplined, accurate, and deadly. The fight took no more than 15 minutes. By then, the ground was littered with the bodies of more than 350 Red Sticks and those warriors who had survived the carnage were fleeing pell-mell through the woods.

The final battle occurred at Horseshoe Bend, where the Tallapoosa River loops around a peninsula. The Red Sticks had built a log barricade across the base of the peninsula and figured that Jackson's troops would either have to swim the river, exposed and vulnerable, or come over the barricade, equally exposed and vulnerable, to get at them. Jackson surprised the Red Sticks by doing both. He had some Indian allies swim the river and attack the Red Sticks from the rear while he sent his Tennessee boys in a frontal assault against the barricade. The Red Sticks were shocked by the mad rush of frontiersmen at their stout barrier. Through heavy fire, the Tennesseans came, clawing their way up and over the logs, and into the midst of the Red Sticks, fighting hand to hand. This time the Indians could not retreat by sprinting into the woods, although some tried to escape by diving into the river. Shooting, clubbing, and stabbing their way through the Red Sticks, the frontiersmen turned the fight into a rout. By the end of the battle, nearly 600 Red Stick warriors lay dead on the peninsula, and another 300 Red Stick corpses were floating in the river. Jackson thought that not more than 20 warriors had escaped. For all intents and purposes, the Red Sticks ceased to exist. Jackson had lost fewer than 30 of his Tennessee boys.

I often wonder what the Indians of the trans-Appalachian West must have thought of this new tribe that had begun pushing into the western parts of Pennsylvania, Virginia, and North Carolina and the eastern parts of Kentucky and Tennessee by the 1760's. The Shawnee, the Cherokee, and the others had never seen anything like it. There were no Lame Bears, Cornstalks, Running Deers, or Flying Crows, but there were Boones, Finleys, McClellands, Martins, McGees, Robertsons,

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McCoys, Buchanans, and Murphys aplenty. The new tribe was essentially an amalgam of several Anglicized Celtic peoples—Scots, Irish, and Scotch-Irish—with a good dose of English and some German thrown in. When the Indians slaughtered a few isolated farm families here and there, they thought that the bloody carnage would have the desired effect of intimidating the rest of the tribe into retreating east of the Appalachians. The Indians had no idea what they had done. They had aroused a fury that would not be spent in a day or two of raiding. They had ignited an infrared rage that would not be dissipated until their own tribes had been destroyed. They were shocked that the warriors of this new tribe followed them for weeks, for months, for hundreds of miles to wreak vengeance or rescue captives. This was not how the game was played. The Indian knew when to quit. The white man did not.

Perhaps if the Indians had understood the music of the new tribe, they might have realized that they were not just playing with fire—they were playing with a fire of white-heat intensity and power. The tribe's jigs and reels were rousing, to be sure, but the melancholy airs said more about the people—dark, deep, poignantly beautiful melodies played on the strings of fiddles, carrying the people away to a distant land, long ago. The melodies tapped into the deepest recesses of the soul, recalling the thoughts, losses, passions, triumphs, defeats, desires, injustices, and dreams of generations of the tribe. Best not to provoke people who created such melodies.

Andrew Jackson was a member of this new tribe. His parents and two older brothers had immigrated to the American colonies in 1765 from Carrickfergus in the northeast corner of Ireland. He was born two years later in the Waxhaw frontier region on the border of North and South Carolina. His father died shortly before he was born. When the British army reached the western Carolinas in 1780, the 13-year-old Jackson joined other rebel frontiersmen in fighting the Redcoats. The next year, he was captured by the British. He rightly thought of himself as a prisoner of war and refused when ordered to shine the boots of a British officer. The officer responded by whacking Jackson across the face with a saber. Although suffering a deep gash which would leave a scar for life, the young lad was only strengthened in his resolve. His mother and two older brothers died as a result of British maltreatment.

Jackson went on to become a frontier lawyer, judge, politician, farmer, militia commander, and U.S. Army general before becoming President. Along the way, he performed feats of legendary proportions, among them his duel with Charles Dickinson. Dickinson was an extraordinary pistol shot, famous throughout Tennessee. Nonetheless, Jackson challenged him to a duel over remarks Dickinson had made about Mrs. Jackson. On the way to the field of honor, Dickinson warmed up by putting four rounds into a target from the prescribed dueling distance. The four bullet holes could be covered with a silver dollar. He then cut a string at the same distance with a single shot. The demonstration was meant to unnerve Jackson, but the iron-willed frontiersman had already decided upon an unusual strategy. He would not hurry his own shot and would allow Dickinson to fire first. Then, if still alive and in a condition to return fire, he would take slow and careful aim before shooting.

The duel proceeded with all customary formalities, and, with the men standing ten paces apart, the command to fire was given. Dickinson quickly leveled his pistol and fired. The bullet hit Jackson in the chest, narrowly missed his heart, and damaged one of his lungs. Somehow he remained standing perfectly straight, ignored the pain, and carefully trained his pistol on Dickinson. The pistol cracked, and a bullet tore into Dickinson, mortally wounding him. As Dickinson lay dying, Jackson strode from the field as if Dickinson's shot had missed. He did not want to give the dying man the satisfaction of knowing that his round had found its mark. Although Dickinson would never know it, the bullet remained lodged next to Jackson's heart and caused him pain for the rest of his life.

Jackson was the first President not to have come from the planting gentry of Virginia or the New England establishment. He was a Scotch-Irish frontiersman, and he became a symbol for Americans of the 19th century. He was self-made, rough-hewn, decisive, independent, fierce, deadly, and courageous. He did not know how to take a step backward. He took risks. He made mistakes. He failed, and he triumphed. He fought Redcoats, redskins, and duels. Jackson embodied the spirit of his tribe and the spirit of the age.

Most 19th-century frontiersmen were versions of Andrew Jackson. They went by the names John Colter, Hugh Glass, Jed Smith, Tom Fitzpatrick, Joe Walker, Kit Carson, Ike Humphreys, Peter O'Riley, John Mackay, William Cody, Richard King, Lee McNelly, Granville Stuart, Charles Goodnight, Joe McCoy, James Butler Hickok, Wyatt Earp, Bat Masterson, Marcus Daly, and thousands of others. Sometimes they went bad, or, at least, they became outlaws. They went by the names Jesse James, Cole Younger, William Bonney, John Wesley Hardin, Clay Allison, Tom Horn, Bob Dalton, Bill Doolin, Tom McCarty, Butch Cassidy, and hundreds of others.

For good or ill, this was the tribe that swept across North America to the Pacific. These were the men who accompanied Lewis and Clark, who planted iron traps in the beaver streams of the Rockies, who stood shoulder-to-shoulder at the Alamo, who took the overland trail to Oregon and California, who worked the deposits of the Mother Lode, who grazed their cattle on the Great Plains. As the 19th century wore on, the tribe was joined by new arrivals from Europe—mainly from Ireland and Germany and, later, on the northern Plains, from Scandinavia—but the tribe's essential nature had already been well established: Courage was admired above all else; death was preferable to dishonor; if challenged, a man was expected to stand and fight; a man's word was his bond; great deference was paid to women; the innocent were protected; God had destined the tribe to inherit the continent.

These principles were absorbed by members of the tribe from childhood on, although boys and girls and men and women manifested them in different ways. Women most often expressed their courage in devotion to duty, enduring hardship without complaint, perseverance, sacrifice for their children, and the willingness to make yet another trek to a new frontier. The first woman to cross overland to California was Nancy Kelsey. She and her husband and her infant daughter were members of the Bidwell party, which set out for California in 1841 from Sapling Grove in eastern Kansas. The party had the good fortune to fall in with the great mountain man Tom Fitzpatrick and a group of missionaries that he was leading to Oregon. "Broken Hand," as the Indians called Fitzpatrick, smoothed the way for the Bidwell party all the way to Soda Springs in southern Idaho. At that point, the trail to California

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separated from the trail to Oregon. Half of the Bidwell party decided to stay with Fitzpatrick and head for Oregon.

The remaining members of the Bidwell party were determined to strike for their original destination, California. Fitzpatrick drew them a map and off they went, 31 men, one woman, and an infant girl. They did not reach the Sierra Nevada until the end of October. Through the towering granite range they struggled, praying that a heavy snowfall would not leave them trapped. They climbed rocky passes, trudged over snowfields, descended into narrow canyons, and crossed and recrossed boulder-strewn streams. They ran out of food and supplies but not courage. Onward they staggered until the San Joaquin Valley came into view. They were the first party of American pioneer settlers to reach California. Nancy Kelsey was one of them. She had crossed the Sierra Nevada and she had done it barefoot and carrying her baby. Her shoes had long since disintegrated. She went on to have nine more children and live into the 20th century.

If Nancy Kelsey displayed courage and rawhide toughness in crossing the Sierra Nevada, so, too, did James Reed, Jr. He was five years old when he accomplished the feat. His family was part of the ill-fated Donner party, trapped in the Sierra during the winter of 1846-47. He was deemed strong enough to attempt to hike out of the mountains with a relief expedition that arrived in February. As he climbed upward in the deep snow from Truckee Lake toward the summit of the Sierra Nevada, he spoke of his father, who was already across the mountains organizing another relief expedition. It seemed impossible that the young lad, having eaten little or no food for several weeks, could continue, but he repeated to himself, "Each step brings me nigher Pa." Several others died, but Jimmy Reed survived. Like Nancy Kelsey, he lived into the 20th century.

Six-year-old Johnny McGuire had absorbed the principles of the tribe. His family operated a way station at the southern end of the Owens Valley in California during the early 1860's. While his father was away, a band of Paiute warriors attacked the station. Johnny and his mother, Mary, put up a furious fight but were forced into the open when the Paiutes succeeded in setting fire to the McGuire's cabin. Two cowboys spotted the smoke rising from the cabin and galloped to the station. They found Mary McGuire riddled with 14 arrows and near death. Beside her lay Johnny, dead. He had been struck by six arrows, his arm broken, his teeth pounded out, and his head bashed in. Mary McGuire, wounded though she was, had somehow managed to pull every arrow out of her son. They had both gone down fighting—an ax was found alongside her body, and Johnny had a rock tightly clenched in his fist, indicating that, as a resident of the Owens Valley said in a newspaper report, the boy "died grit." The Home Guard, a militia company of settlers, was in the field by the next day. The militiamen trailed the Paiutes for three days and then surprised them at a camp on the eastern shore of Owens Lake. Thirty-five of the Indians were killed, including two warriors shot by Johnny's father.

The principles of the tribe changed little throughout the 19th century, although advancing technology caused some variations on the old themes. The formal duel of the first half of the 19th century was generally replaced by the gunfight following the introduction of the revolver. As a result, gunfights occurred with great frequency, especially in the mining camps of the Far West. No mining camp gunfighter was deadlier than John Daly. Born in New York City, he came to California as a teenager and began his gunfighting career in the camps of the Mother Lode during the 1850's. In 1863, he was hired by the Pond mining company in Aurora, Nevada. The Pond was waging a legal battle with the Real Del Monte mining company over conflicting claims on Last Chance Hill. Legal expenses would run into the hundreds of thousands of dollars. Outside of court, the Pond and Real Del Monte would spend thousands more on hired guns. Daly and his "boys" were hired to oppose the hired guns of the Del Monte and to intimidate the rival mining company's executives and witnesses.

Daly's first gunfight in Aurora was with another hired gun, George Lloyd. A Saturday night found the two of them in P.J. McMahan's Exchange saloon. A few words passed between them, and they went for their guns. A split second later both men were firing. Daly was unhit, but Lloyd slumped to the saloon's floor, dead. Daly had, by most counts, killed his 11th man. The townsfolk of Aurora were unmoved by the death of Lloyd and by the deaths of other gunfighters. "So long as they did not molest peaceable citizens," commented one of the town's newspapers some months later, "their shooting and killing one another was borne with by the people with utter indifference."

> Andrew Jackson would have chosen death before dishonor. He was the symbol of his age. And the symbol of our age—Bill Clinton?

A month later, the Pond and Del Monte trial was moved to Carson City. There, John Daly ran into an old rival, Joe McGee, in the St. Nicholas saloon. McGee had killed several men in gunfights, including two of Daly's friends. Now McGee and Daly went at it. Shots rang out, and McGee tumbled to the floor, dead. McGee was number 12 for Daly. The next month, the Pond and Del Monte trial ended in a hung jury, and the two mining companies settled out of court rather than go to trial again. The services of Daly and his boys were no longer needed, and they returned to Aurora. Daly reckoned that there was still one outstanding debt to settle before he moved on to other towns and new adventures. William Johnson, who ran a way station on the road between Aurora and Carson City, had been indirectly responsible for the death of one of Daly's gang members. Daly decided Johnson should die. Coincidentally, none other than Johnson himself arrived at Aurora to sell a load of potatoes that he had grown at his way station. After making the sale, Johnson lingered in town to enjoy the night life. Daly, accompanied by three of his boys, intercepted Johnson and put a bullet in his brain. To make certain Johnson was dead, one of Daly's boys cut Johnson's throat.

The next morning, Johnson's body was discovered. The residents of Aurora were furious. Two men—be they profession-

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al gunmen, miners, teamsters, or cowboys—killing one another in something resembling a fair fight was one thing, and such occurred nearly 20 times during Aurora's first few years, but Johnson's killing was another. The Code of the West, the mores of the tribe, had been broken. Immediately, a vigilance committee was organized and an investigation launched. Arrests were made, witnesses interrogated, depositions taken, and evidence was gathered. All roads were guarded and patrols sent into the hinterland. The vigilantes operated with military discipline and precision. By the end of the week, John Daly and the three gang members who had been with him at the time of Johnson's killing were in custody. At the same time, the official coroner's jury rendered its verdict: John Daly, William Buckley, Jack McDowell, and James Masterson were responsible for the death of William Johnson. Official institutions of law enforcement and justice would be allowed to do no more, however. The vigilance committee announced that Daly and the others would now hang.

If Hollywood were to make this story into a movie, the four men would turn craven on the scaffold. Few in Hollywood today understand, let alone appreciate, the character of the men or the spirit of the times that produced the Old West. So what actually happened? Hundreds of vigilantes with fixed bayonets formed a hollow square around the scaffold while a crowd of 5,000 watched. Daly, Buckley, McDowell, and Masterson, according to the *Aurora Times*, mounted the platform "with a firm step, and surveyed the immense crowd with apparent cool indifference." Daly pointed at a member of the vigilance committee who was brandishing a revolver and said, "You son of a bitch. If I had a six-shooter I would make you get." He then took several silver dollars out of his pocket, threw them to the crowd, and declared:

> There are two innocent men on this scaffold. You are going to hang two innocent men. Do you understand that? I am guilty. I killed Johnson. Buckley and I killed Johnson. . . . He was the means of killing my friend, and I lived to die for him. Had I lived I would have wiped out Johnson's whole generation.

Buckley then made a similar speech, stating that he and Daly were guilty, and concluded by saying, "Adieu, boys. I wish you all well. All of you boys must come up to my wake in John Daly's cabin tonight. Be sure of this. Good-bye. God bless you all." McDowell, following Buckley, declared that he was innocent. Then, with a "Good-bye, boys," he suddenly pulled a derringer from his pocket, put the gun to his heart, and pulled the trigger. It failed to fire. He hurled the gun to the ground with an oath, stepped back, and said, "I'll die like a tiger." Masterson then stepped forward, cool and possessed, and declared, "Gentlemen, I am innocent." "Yes, Buckley and I did the deed," added Daly. With that the four men had their hands tied and nooses adjusted around their necks. A minister said a final prayer, a small cannon was fired, and the trapdoor sprung.

Facing the hangman's noose, these badmen were brave, cool, and unwilling to dishonor themselves. They were members of the tribe and understood that they had gone beyond the pale by killing Johnson. The only protest came over whether McDowell and Masterson should hang also. But even those two accepted their fate without a whine. Death was preferable to dishonor.

I cannot count the number of times I have heard professors, lawyers, radio talk-show hosts, and politicians try to temper the anger of the general citizenry at the outrages committed by inner-city gangs by comparing those gangs with the outlaws of the Old West. Beyond being young, armed, and male, is there anything at all that they have in common? Do Daly and his boys resemble the Crips? Could the James boys, the Youngers, the Daltons, Bill Doolin's gang, or the Wild Bunch be mistaken for the Bloods? In Aurora, men were fined and jailed for using foul language in the presence of women. There were no reported cases of rape and absolutely nothing to indicate that rape occurred but went unreported. There was almost no crime of any kind committed against women. Nellie Cashman, who spent 60 years on the frontier and roamed from Arizona to Alaska, was asked shortly before she died if she had ever feared for her virtue while trekking from one strike to another and living in nearly all-male mining camps. "Bless your soul, no!" she replied. "I never have had a word said to me out of the way. The boys would sure see to it that anyone who ever offered to insult me could never be able to repeat the offense."

On the other hand, gang-bangers today impulsively rape. No matter what other crimes they commit—murder, robbery, burglary, carjacking—they also rape. When robbing, they target the young, the old, the weak, the innocent, and the female. Does this sound like the work of Jesse James, Cole Younger, Black Bart, Billy the Kid, Bob Dalton, or Butch Cassidy?

Kevin Rogers is a detective with the LAPD who specializes in investigation of gang-related homicides. He has been with the department for 24 years and is a Marine veteran who served as an FO in Vietnam. I asked him how he would describe the gang members he deals with. "Cowardly," was his immediate reply. While I can cite hundreds of cases of frontiersmen—outlaw or not—facing each other and fighting to the death, Rogers could not recall a single instance of that occurring in Los Angeles. "The last time I saw anything at all like that," said Rogers, "the gangs were the Sharks and Jets."

Gang homicides in Los Angeles are almost always the result of the members of one gang catching a member of another gang off guard and alone. The lone gang member is simply executed. This does not remind me of the hundreds of characters I have studied in the Old West, men who stood firmly and resolutely in the face of deadly fire and coolly shot their adversary to death. "Get yourself heeled," yelled S.B. Vance to Tom Carberry, who was unarmed at the moment. Both were former members of the Daly gang. Vance had arrived in Austin, Nevada's latest boomtown, only to find Carberry there and to learn that Carberry was reigning as the town's premier shootist. Not willing to suffer an inferior status, Vance issued the challenge. Carberry armed himself and met Vance on Austin's main street. Vance drew his gun and opened fire. With bullets whistling by his head, Carberry coolly walked toward Vance and then, from a closer range, rested his revolver across his left arm, took careful aim, and killed Vance with a single bullet.

There really is no comparison between what occurred in the Old West and what happens in American cities today. No, if a comparison is to be made with the frontier, try looking at 20th-century figures such as George Patton, Alvin York, Audie Murphy, Butch O'Hare, or Bull Halsey. Nor is there any comparison when it comes to presidents. Andrew Jackson would have chosen death before dishonor. He was the symbol of his age. And the symbol of our age—Bill Clinton?

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Print the Legend

Retaking the Alamo

by William Murchison

At the Alamo, Davy Crockett either: A. Died while swinging old Betsy; B. Came radically disconnected when he torched the powder magazine; C. Surrendered to the Mexicans, who tortured, then killed him, along with six other Anglo survivors of the siege.

Does it matter immensely which of these versions of Crockett's death commends itself to us as truthful? Possibly not. A and C (the trick choice, B, is the version from John Wayne's famous film, *The Alamo*) lead to the very same place: the tiny Alamo garrison wiped out, Santa Anna's vastly more powerful Mexican army in full possession of San Antonio de Bexar, Texas's hopes for independence flickering low in the ashes, waiting to be kindled less than six weeks later at San Jacinto.

Why, then, the sensitivity—much trumpeted in the media these past few months—over which version is right, A or C? What's it all got to do with the price of eggs in Arkansas? Especially given that, just before Texas Independence Day (March 2) of this year, a random poll of Texans uncovered what appears to be widespread public ignorance concerning events at the Alamo. I say "what appears" because you know about polls, especially random ones conducted, as in this case, by a New York City firm. Anyway, I solemnly relay the finding that 36 percent of the 403 people surveyed could not name *anyone* who died at the Alamo, nine percent did not know where the battle took place, and 23 percent were unaware whose army overwhelmed the Texicans. I conclude with the caution that each one of these people's votes counts just as much as yours and mine.

William Murchison is a nationally syndicated columnist for the Dallas Morning News.

But the point was Davy Crockett, King of the Wild Frontier, as the Disney series and its lilting George Bruns theme song denominated him. Does it matter how he died? Certainly not to those who are not even sure he was at the Alamo. Among the conventionally informed, the Crockett death story has achieved a certain resonance. A political resonance, you will gather from your knowledge of the circumstances.

In 1975, the English translation of a Mexican officer's diary first made headlines, chiefly because of the officer's claim to have seen Crockett and six other Alamo defenders tortured and executed by the Mexicans *after* the battle. This account, if true, set at naught the received version of Crockett's death *during* the battle.

Of course, there was more to the matter than this. News, however long delayed, of a Crockett execution could be seen as deflating a romantic and heroic story. In the late 20th century, as in George Orwell's day, the self-enlightened squint balefully at romance and heroism, which pull the wool over ordinary people's eyes, ratify the claims of a ruling class, blah blah blah. We still battle the same cultural cynicism that Orwell cogently confronted in his time.

The legend of the Alamo concerned *all* the defenders dying at their posts for the sake of freedom. ("Now the bugles are silent, and there's rust on each sword / And the small band of soldiers lie asleep in the arms of the Lord . . . "—Paul Francis Webster, from the John Wayne version.) What if one of those defenders—the most famous of them at that—could be shown to have surrendered, possibly cringed, even begged for his life? Puncture a myth, and the air escapes rapidly.

Well, the diary of Col. Jose Enrique de la Peña made a brief sensation. As it happened, not the same sensation de la Peña had envisioned in the 1830's when he penned it, probably in

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prison. De la Peña shared the Texans' dislike of the cruel and crafty Antonio López de Santa Anna, who had commanded the Mexican forces at the Alamo. De la Peña clearly hoped to show Santa Anna at his worst.

In fact, the diary disappeared, turning up again only in the 1950's. When it did so, the Crockett story, as reported in the media, seemed to matter more than the depredations of Santa Anna—who, let's face it, could be viewed as a sort of Third World founding father. All the burning, searching questions were turned upon the Alamo "myth." The alleged inferiority of the John Wayne and Disney versions of the Crockett story was widely implied and sometimes stated forthrightly. (John Wayne's Hollywood "heroism" has drawn similarly condescending glances from writers analyzing *Saving Private Ryan*—a matter to which I shall shortly return.)

The diary became a freight car on which could be loaded random criticisms of white Anglo society and its assorted myths. That de la Peña's account cannot be verified objectively—any more than the received version can be—does not stop the chatter. A deconstructionist age has endless room for alternative readings of What Everyone Knows To Be True. The Gospels themselves are not so sacred as to prevent, say, the frequent assertion that the Resurrection represented merely what the Disciples wanted to believe about the continued presence of their crucified Lord.

The 1990's are likely even better prepared than the 1970's to relish the taste of shredded myth. We have had 20 years longer to work up an appetite, and now the increasingly Hispanic cast of Southwestern life reinforces motives of cultural relativism. The Alamo story implies cultural superiority: Anglos triumphant over Mexicans. Well. The Alamo story partakes of fevered mythmaking, don't you know? That means a large number of things, no doubt. We will be informed in due course.

The de la Peña story resurfaced in November 1998, when the diary came up for auction in California. It fetched $387,500. The two buyers, business partners from Dallas and Houston, one of whom owns two sports teams in Dallas, have donated the manuscript to the University of Texas. The team owner is a member of the UT board of regents. Said he, inadvertently opening a window on his soul: "Whether it's the football stadium or this or the business school, these are all resources and treasures."

Out again, with the news stories about the auction, came the well-worn reproaches: history presented as Anglo myth, heroism as popular entertainment, the masses misled, racial understanding thwarted. On and on. "The Alamo has been a victory of cultural memory over history," claims one Hispanic anthropologist. One might think we were viewing *Rashomon* instead of *The Alamo*, so many are the angles of vision. What once seemed so simple—a story of heroism and sacrifice—is made to do duty as a venture in cultural reconstruction. That there is no "history" apart from culture—in other words, that the culture endlessly recycles its history, retells its yarns—is the point on which general agreement is likeliest to be reached.

The 1960's, which never go away, have prompted the current reexamination of the Alamo, ah, myth. The question of what the 60's are whispering in our ears, and sometimes more than whispering, is probably more interesting than the question of whether Davy Crockett fell during or after the battle. After all, Crockett went out, more or less, swinging. As de la Peña himself wrote: "Though tortured before they were killed, these unfortunates died without complaining and without humiliating themselves before their torturers." More heroism there, one might argue, than in receiving a quick bullet through the brain. Says another Alamo expert, James Crisp of North Carolina State University: "In no way does being captured equate to cowardice. And it shows that men on both sides were capable of grace under pressure."

It could be left at that but for the obvious compulsion in certain segments of the culture ever to be picking away at the handiwork of past generations. Oh, the Alamo was a heroic last stand, was it—a modern Thermopylae? What about Crockett? Sure, sure, he died . . . just not the way *they* said. Let's undermine *their* authority—all those dead guys from whom we derive so many moldering suppositions.

That there is no "history" apart from culture—in other words, that the culture endlessly recycles its history, retells its yarns—is the point on which general agreement is likeliest to be reached.

It is like the Scriptures. Paint a new and arresting picture of the Resurrection—that central snippet from the creeds—and you can go on to redefine the Church. Demythologization preoccupies us because it opens escape hatches from the present. To escape the bonds of the past is to experience power in radical new forms.

Why do we have to escape the bonds of the past? Because, silly, the past is full of grievous, almost unpardonable stuff: racism, sexism, imperialism, ageism, and so on. The times in which they lived make the men of the Alamo automatically suspect. These were not open times; they were closed to women and blacks, and, in the Texas of 1836, were closing to Hispanics. The myths of such a time should not be taken on faith. Myth tells a story that just may not be true. We must examine those stories with a critical eye. Truth will yet out. As maybe it will, the narrow viewpoint of the myth-busters notwithstanding. The myth-busters are not above the construction of myths; in fact, they revel in the task.

For instance, the newly emerging Alamo myth cannot be honest about the old myth. You would think, for Pete's sake, they could get right the stuff they see in the movies, never mind diaries. John Wayne's *The Alamo*, released in 1960, a good two decades before political correctness and Hispanic consciousness, campaigns almost fanatically for fairness to the besieging Mexicans. I have not seen the movie in some years, but here

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are a few things I remember: Crockett has a pre-Alamo romance with a Mexican woman, from whom he gallantly detaches himself as the siege begins; after the first, repulsed Mexican charge, one of Crockett's men, Thimblerig, says of the fallen Mexican soldiers something I remember as, "I was proud of 'em. Even when I was killing 'em, I was proud of 'em"; Mexican women, after the first charge, are depicted tenderly mourning the dead, caring for the wounded; as the survivors leave the Alamo, Santa Anna, his troops drawn up in orderly ranks, sweeps off his hat.

Don't the guys analyzing old movies take the time actually to see the movies? Don't they have at least a Blockbuster in their neighborhoods?

Throughout *The Alamo*, the Duke, who learned the film trade from the great custodian of myth, John Ford, was respectful of the combatants on both sides (as Ford was respectful of, and often enough affectionate toward, the Indians in his pictures). But, you see, that ain't precisely the point. The name John Wayne is poison with cultural revisionists, connoting as it does a culture of masculine violence. We are supposed to reject such a culture and whatever pertains to it.

The "John Wayne version" of war came under fire in appraisals of *Saving Private Ryan*, which supposedly shows us, for the first time ever, war in all its insanity and horror. I have not yet seen *Ryan*, and therefore do not wish to expose myself to the same censure I visit on certain critics of *The Alamo*. I merely remark an unfortunate tendency in our cultural wars to disrespect John Wayne-ism without trying to understand what Wayne-ism may not, as well as may, represent.

The resistance of many to the de la Peña findings may or may not be wise, historically speaking. There is this much to be said for it, perhaps: Resistance, reverse skepticism, affirms the transcendent value of myth. It salutes the power of legend to exalt those who affirm and live by the legend. Diary critics may fail to appropriate Col. de la Peña as an ally. Study of the diaries at UT may show this to be an error. On the other hand, modern times make the wise very nervous when the odor of revisionism is in the air. The tendency of revisionists to toss out babies along with bath water is famous.

A post-*Alamo* John Wayne picture, *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, wrestles with the question of the invigorating power of myth and legend. The film, not surprisingly, was directed by John Ford. Many reading this disquisition already know the story, but I will summarize the argument anyway.

Was it or was it not right for the editor of the *Shinbone Star* to print the newly acquired news about local hero James Stewart: to wit, that he had not, contrary to the common belief that launched his successful political career, dispatched the outlaw Liberty Valance? (The real killer? John Wayne. Of course.) The editor, who clearly had never darkened the door of a modern journalism school, listened to Stewart's account of thitherto-unknown events . . . and crumpled his notes. Wasn't he going to print the story? No, he was not: "This is the West, sir. When the legend becomes fact, print the legend."

A good formula, this, for ending up in Shinbone as opposed to getting your own show on CNN. Does a modern man of integrity want to commend such an outrageous viewpoint in front of ever-questioning intellectuals?

I think maybe what he wants to do is smile in a satisfied way, avoid direct commentary, and murmur to himself through the movie credits.

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Welcome to Dodge City

The Gun on the Frontier

by Dave Kopel

Gregory L. Newbold

On the American frontier of previous centuries, the possession of a firearm was often a key to survival. In this regard, the frontier of 20th-century America, although different geographically, is very much like earlier frontiers.

As different waves of Europeans arrived in North America, each took a distinct approach to trading guns with the Indians. The Dutch, settling in New Netherlands (now lower New York State), came from one of history's greatest trading empires. Dutch settlers of the Hudson River Valley bartered guns to the Mohawk tribes. In 1643, some of the Mohawk launched a two-year war against Dutch settlements, but they spared the Hudson communities that continued to sell guns to the Indians.

The Dutch attempted to license gun traders in 1650, hoping to shut off the Indians' supply. The West India Company protested, arguing that Indians would pay a black-market price so high that controls were impossible. In 1656, the government decreed that settlers could possess only matchlock rifles; modern flintlock rifles, which were more reliable and easier and faster to fire, were banned. A death penalty for selling guns to the Indians was enacted, but the law failed to stop the trade.

No matter what the Dutch did, the natives had a ready supply of guns from the French. One firearm, usually a musket, was worth 20 beaver pelts. The main partners of the French were the Ottawa (whose name means "to trade"), who brought guns even deeper into America, and shared in French prosperity—much to the annoyance of their rivals, the Iroquois.

In the early 17th century, the Iroquois nation allied with the Dutch settlers in the Hudson Valley or with the nearby British. By mid-century, the heavily armed Iroquois began a 60-year campaign called the Beaver Wars to destroy the trade of France and her Indian allies, especially the Ottawa. The Iroquois' main objective was to replace the Ottawa as middlemen, trading beaver pelts for European guns. The French and Ottawa prevailed, however, and their trade continued to expand.

The war confirmed to the governor of New France, the Comte de Frontenac, that friendship with Indian traders was the best policy. Building an empire of commerce that stretched deep into what would become the Louisiana Territory, Frontenac did everything possible to supply the Indians with guns. Because the gun made big-game hunting so much more profitable and because many Indian tribes were involved in wars with each other, firearms were the most valuable commodity a European could offer. The French explorer La Salle observed: "The savages take better care of us French than of their own children. From us only can they get guns and goods."

Unlike the English (and later the Americans), the French did not settle the land with waves of immigrant farmers. Trade was what the French wanted, and the sparse population necessary to trade throughout the Louisiana Territory and Canada did not threaten the Indians. Thanks to the success of their commerce with the Indians, the French, coming down from Canada, reached western Pennsylvania and Ohio before English settlers from the Atlantic coast found their way through the gaps in the Appalachian Mountains.

But with the victory of Britain and its colonies in the French and Indian War of 1754-63, the French were expelled from much of North America. In a hundred years, France had sold the Indians 200,000 guns. Although there were no more imports, French traders within formerly French territory kept trading their existing stock of guns to the Indians.

Exploring the southern part of North America, the Spaniards enslaved the Indians to expand the Spanish Empire. In 1501, only nine years after Columbus's discovery of the New World, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella banned the sale of guns to Indians. Many Indians in Florida and the Southwest, though, stole guns from the Spanish or bought them through a trading network linked to the French. The enslaved Pueblo In-

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Dave Kopel is an adjunct professor of law at the New York University School of Law and research director with the Independence Institute. This article is adapted in part from his book The Samurai, the Mountie, and the Cowboy: Should America Adopt the Gun Control Policies of Other Democracies?

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dians of New Mexico, who had acquired and hoarded guns one at a time, revolted in 1680. Pueblo attacks in the next 16 years killed hundreds of whites and pushed white settlement out of Santa Fe, all the way back to El Paso. In the 1750's, Comanche raiders, using guns supplied by the French, forced Spain to abandon north Texas.

When guns were not going into Spanish territory, the Spanish realized that selling guns to Indians could be in Spain's interest. For example, Spanish Florida supplied firearms to the Indians of the Gulf Plain, to be used to harass British settlers in Georgia and Alabama.

At first, the English colonists followed a policy similar to that of the Spanish. Officially, arms trading with the Indians was prohibited. In 1641, the Crown ordered that no person should give the Indians "any weapons of war, either guns or gunpowder, nor sword, nor any other Munition, which might come to be used against ourselves." Despite the Crown's orders, however, many merchants in the colonies found trade with the Indians advantageous.

Soon enough, the British began trading guns with tribes in Illinois and the rest of what would become the Northwest Territory. As trouble with the American colonists worsened, the British saw the advantage of arming the Indians to attack the encroaching American farmers and backwoodsmen. When the British cut off the arms trade in the Great Lakes region in 1763, the Indians were outraged. Chief Pontiac—acting on the advice of a prophet who preached that guns should be rejected as evil instruments of the whites—organized the Ottawa and nine other tribes into a confederacy that annihilated numerous English frontier posts in the West. But the American Indians were incapable of carrying out sustained warfare, and when English reinforcements arrived, the Indians retreated to Illinois.

For the new people who would be called "Americans," life itself would have been impossible without firearms. Historian Daniel Boorstin notes, "Shooting small game with a bow or a gun and throwing a tomahawk became lifesaving skills when Indians attacked." As Lee Kennett and James LaVerne Anderson explained in *The Gun in America*, because frontiersmen had to hunt their food and defend themselves against Indians, "civil and military uses of firearms dovetailed as they had not generally done in Europe." Survival meant not only fighting Indians, but also hunting for food. The European emigrants who settled America abandoned aristocratic anti-poaching rules. Game animals in the American wilderness were a public bounty, not a private possession.

The special demands of the American gun market led to major innovations in firearms production. Because of the lack of big game, civilian rifle output and design had been stunted in Britain since the 16th century; America took the lead in making rifles for its people. The .45 caliber Kentucky rifle was introduced for hunting game and killing Indians; it also served well in the wars with Britain.

Pistols gained popularity as backup sidearms in case a rifle jammed or more rapid fire was needed. The practice of carrying two guns persisted even after flintlocks were replaced by more reliable guns: Most Western gunfighters sported a pair of revolvers.

The introduction of the revolver in the 1840's changed the face of warfare. Almost all earlier guns needed to be reloaded after every shot; the few guns that could hold three or more rounds (such as the "pepperbox") were eccentric and unreliable. With the mass production of Col. Samuel Colt's revolving handguns, the whites gained massive firepower superiority over the Indians.

The first major application of Colt technology was in Texas; there, Indians on horseback could launch arrows more quickly than settlers could fire and reload single-shot rifles. Moreover, a rifle was heavy and difficult to discharge from horseback. With Colt revolvers, Texans could exceed the Indians' rate of fire and shoot while mounted. The leap in technology from single-shot guns to the revolver was of far greater significance than subsequent refinements of multi-shot weapons. According to historian Carl Russell, the introduction of the revolver "marked the turning point in Indian warfare in the Far West by giving the white man superiority."

"The gun had a greater influence in changing the primitive ways of the Indians than any other object brought to America by the white man," Russell writes. The spread of French guns into the Louisiana Territory changed relations among the many tribes. The French trade shifted the balance of power to tribes that could get guns, and set all tribes on a feverish arms-trading race.

Even after the French were gone, the race continued. For example, British traders from the Hudson Bay Company traded guns for beaver with the Kutchin, who in turn used the guns for defense against the Eskimos. Tribes that lived near the encroaching English faced "the choice of buying guns to defend themselves, or else being killed or enslaved," explains Charles M. Hudson in *Indians, Animals, and the Fur Trade*.

Guns were used for more than war. For the Plains Indians, the combination of guns and horses (brought to the New World by the Spanish) engendered a new era of material prosperity. Hunting and survival became much easier, and the standard of living skyrocketed.

Nevertheless, the firearm remained a symbol of white superiority. Most tribes did not know how to make gunpowder. Although Indians became adept at firing guns, they still could not manufacture or repair them. A malfunctioning rifle was apt to be coerced with fire, water, and brute force. Weapons were also destroyed through neglect and lack of maintenance. Moreover, the gun trade itself drew the Indians into an economically dependent relationship with the whites.

As Indian cultures faced extermination, prophets arose. By returning to the old ways, the prophets said, to the ways before the gun and whites and the technology that could never be mastered, the tribes could restore harmony with the spirits. The spiritual rejection of firearms and other white technologies, first preached by a Delaware in 1764, was taken up by Pontiac in his efforts to unite all eastern tribes to push the whites into the sea. Half a century later, as the whites were conquering the upper Midwest, the mystic Tenskwatawa implored the tribes of the Northwest Territory to reject firearms, alcohol, and other evils introduced by the Europeans. His half-brother, Tecumseh, organized tribes from Alabama to North Carolina to Canada in a grand alliance to stop white expansion. Tecumseh disdained firearms because the explosions frightened the deer. Practicality intervened, though, and the prophecy was elaborated to allow guns for fighting the whites but not for hunting.

The frontier war against the Indians meant that, for over two centuries, many Americans were armed and ready to kill at a moment's notice. While the savage war between whites and

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Indians laid a foundation for America's attachment to the gun, it does not provide a convincing explanation of why America still cherishes the gun, long after the danger of an Indian raid has passed.

The frontier conditions which forced so many Americans to own guns for protection have changed, but they have not disappeared. The lawless frontier is no longer found in the woods of Massachusetts or in remote parts of Texas. Rather, the frontier is the American city. While the racial warfare between whites and Indians has disappeared, today decent Americans of all races must defend themselves from a large criminal class of all races. But there is one important difference. Indians and whites, vicious as they could be in warfare, typically grew up in two-parent families and lived in close-knit traditional communities. Our modern criminals are much less civilized.

As the late Senator Frank Church wrote in *Restricting Handguns: The Liberal Skeptics Speak Out*, most people

> would not go into ghetto areas at all except in broad daylight under the most optimum conditions—surely not at night, alone or on foot. But some people have no choice. To live or work or have some need to be on this "frontier" imposes a fear which is tempered by possession of a gun.

Chief Justice Rehnquist agrees that the inner city is not adequately defended by the government: "we are rapidly approaching the state of savagery. . . . In the Nation's Capital, law enforcement authorities cannot protect the lives of employees of this very Court who live four blocks from the building in which we sit."

The famous cattle town of Dodge City, Kansas, experienced many wild times when drunken cowboys rode into town, ready for a fight and willing to spend their season's wages on women and liquor. When former Washington, D.C., Mayor Marion Barry enforced a ban on gun ownership for self-defense, he declared, "Washington is not Dodge City." No, it is not: Modern Washington's per capita homicide rate exceeds Dodge City's during the frontier era. Despite the recent drop in crime rates, many American cities today are much more dangerous than Dodge City ever was.

In Dodge City, victims were at least allowed to defend themselves. (Indeed, the drunken cowboys of Dodge City and similar locales tended to pick on each other in "fair fights" rather than prey on innocent women and children.)

According to a Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics study, the chance that an American child aged 12 years will be the victim of a violent crime during her lifetime is 73 percent. The chances of two or more victimizations is 52 percent. Nevertheless, the United States Conference of Mayors insists, "The probability of being raped, robbed, or assaulted is low enough to seriously call into question the need for Americans to keep loaded guns."

Of course big-city mayors like Chicago's Richard Daley really do not need to keep loaded guns. They are protected by taxpayer-supplied bodyguards carrying loaded guns.

Many other gun-prohibition advocates, although not surrounded by taxpayer-funded protection, have their own security guards. While there are several hundred thousand police officers in the United States (dedicated to protecting the whole population), there are 1.4 million private security guards dedicated to protecting those who can pay them. "Private security guards are simply vigilantes for the rich," writes former West Virginia Supreme Court Chief Justice Richard Neely. If society allows rich people to hire security guards (most of whom are very poorly trained), is it just for society to forbid less wealthy citizens to protect themselves?

Chief Justice Neely writes:

> The same government, academic and media elites who cluck their tongues at even such benign citizen forces as New York's Guardian Angels have nothing unkind to say about bank guards, railroad detectives or the little chap who sits in the guard shack at the entrance to Jonathan's Landing in Palm Beach County, Florida.

Today's gun prohibition advocates often claim that, while gun possession on the old American frontier might have been justifiable, modern conditions are different. They are right. Many parts of the modern American frontier are more dangerous than the old frontier. And on the old frontier, potential victims did not have to contend with hypocritical, well-guarded elites who wanted to disarm the common people.

©

The Passionate Shepherd's Return

by Richard Moore

A Celebration of the Works of Dostoyevsky, Chekhov, Stalin, and Others

Come live with me
in ancient Moscovy.
I got a little hovel
near Yaroslavl.

There mud and God mingle,
and every slat and shingle,
warped, madly curled,
has changed the world.

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"All the News Unfit to Print"

Signs of the Times

Vol. 1 No. 6 June 1999

America went to war against the Serbs in March, ostensibly because of their refusal to sign the so-called peace agreement put forward by the United States and its allies at Rambouillet, France. Many other reasons were subsequently advanced, but this was the original one. President Clinton told us that the Albanians "chose peace" by signing, while the Serbs, he said, refused to negotiate, even though the agreement left Kosovo as part of Yugoslavia. But as Ronald Hatchett explained in the *Houston Chronicle* on March 28:

> the "peace plan" actually gives the Albanians precisely what they want: de facto independence now, with guaranteed de jure independence in three years. For the Serbs, signing the Rambouillet agreement would actually be signing away all Serbian sovereignty over Kosovo immediately.

Under the agreement, "Kosovo will have the authority to make laws not subject to revision by Serbia or the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia," including levying taxes, instituting development programs, and conducting foreign relations. Yugoslav army and police were to withdraw completely from Kosovo, except for a tiny guard within a three-mile border zone. NATO was to enter with close to 30,000 troops, "which will be authorized to use necessary force to ensure compliance with the accords." A Civilian Implementation Mission was to be appointed by NATO, and its chief given the authority "to issue binding directives to the Parties on all important matters he sees fit, including appointing and removing officials and curtailing institutions." Most importantly of all, a "final settlement for Kosovo" would be decided by the outsiders in three years "on the basis of the will of the people" of Kosovo. As Hatchett concludes:

> For the Kosovo Albanians, the Rambouillet agreement gives them total control over the province immediately. The only "sacrifice" required of them is to wait three years before the arrangements are made legally permanent. . . . The Serbian negotiating efforts were summarily dismissed and the Serbs were told they had only two choices: sign the agreement as written or face NATO bombing. What would you have done if you were on the Serb delegation?

The rest is history. As a commentator put it in the *Times* of London (March 18), Serbia had to "stand and fall before NATO rather than slink into the dog kennel for voluntary vivisection." Another commentator remarked in the *Guardian* (April 10) that a century-long effort "to establish an international system capable of setting limits to the imperial ambitions of great powers, has been brought to an abrupt end."

Devoid of arguments and fearful of informed pressure, the Clinton administration soon began trafficking in stories about massive atrocities in order to sway a reluctant public. State Department spokesman James Rubin suggested that Serbs were herding Albanians into Pristina stadium (State Department Briefing, March 30). He attributed the report to KLA commander Hashin Thaqi, with whom—according to *Agence France Presse* (March 18)—Rubin personally has a "good rapport."

On March 31, a reporter with *Agence France Presse* visited the stadium and reported that

> the stadium, whose galleries can host some 25,000 spectators, was completely empty and there were no signs of any mass groupings. Rows of seats stood empty and the grass looked intact . . .

The following day, Mr. Rubin was asked about the discrepancy. According to the official transcript, the exchange went as follows:

> Q: We've gotten a report this morning which is what I believe is the first independent report out of Pristina in some days, saying that Thaqi's claim yesterday that a hundred thousand people were massed in the Pristina stadium—
> MR. RUBIN: I didn't make that claim—we didn't make that claim.
> Q: Well, it's been referred to. But anyway—anyway, this report says that this . . .
> MR. RUBIN: I never heard him say that.

NATO spinmeisters were not to be outdone by the U.S. State Department. On April 10, Scripps Howard News Service reported that "NATO commanders have already admitted that fear of hitting *Albanian* civilians discouraged some strikes on designated targets" (emphasis added). But dehumanization of Serbian victims had reached the point where NATO spokesman Jamie Shea could calmly state that a passenger train, destroyed along with scores of civilians on April 12, was a "legitimate military target."

What is this bombing all about? Writing in *Capitol Hill Blue* on April 5, Doug Thompson opined that Clinton's Kosovo war "is part of a desperate, dangerous and fatally flawed plan by a scandal-ridden President to salvage a legacy for the history books":

> In fact, the President is willing to risk a global military conflict to shift the emphasis . . . away from the many sex and money scandals that have dogged his administration, interviews with present and past White House and Pentagon staff members reveal. . . . Former Navy Capt. Al Simonson says he knows several career military professionals who are willing to resign their commissions rather than continue to

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serve under Clinton. "I've been around the military for more than 30 years and I have never seen morale this low," Simonson says. "Bill Clinton has destroyed the soul of our armed forces." . . . A psychologist who treats obsessions says Clinton's preoccupation with his legacy could be viewed by mental health professionals as a warning sign over the President's stability. "There are enough outward signs that the President is so driven by his obsession with his legacy that it could be affecting his mental judgments," says Dr. Stephanie Crossfield.

The fundamental idiocy of the Balkan tragedy was aptly summarized by Julie Burchill in the *Guardian* ("Forty reasons why the Serbs are not the new Nazis and the Kosovars are not the new Jews," April 10):

1) Because the Nazis did not put Jews on the train to Israel, as the Serbs are now putting ethnic Albanian Kosovars on the train to Albania.
2) Because we're the ones fighting alongside the Luftwaffe and the Serbs are the ones whom the Luftwaffe is bombing. . . .
9) Because Clinton is a liar. . . .
11) Because the Kosovan Liberation Army is a terrorist organisation that has been killing innocent Serbs for years, whereas the Jews were model citizens. . . .
13) Because it wasn't the Serbs who fought with the Nazis in Yugoslavia during the second world war—it was the Croats and the Muslims. (Nazi Muslims! What an absolutely mind-blowingly terrifying concept!)
14) Because, if they were Nazis, the US wouldn't be fighting them but funding them, like all those old pigs it props up in Latin America. . . .
16) Because anyone who knows anything about European history before 1945 backs the Serbs. . . .
22) Because the Serbs have a bittersweet sense of humour, whereas the Nazis, being Germans, were utterly humourless. After all, can you really imagine the Krauts during the time of the Allied bombardment going around with a bullseye and the word "TARGET" painted on their faces?
23) Because the Serbs were the only people in Yugoslavia who never persecuted the Jews.
24) Because Blair can't be trusted when he gazes into Billy Bob's big blue eyes and the hormones kick in. . . .
28) Because the Jews didn't indulge in personal vendettas as they went into the countries that welcomed them as refugees, let alone get to the point of shooting each other at point blank range, as two Kosovar men did in Calais last week while they were waiting to be put on the boat to Britain.
29) Because the Jews didn't growl at women on the streets of their host countries, as Albanian men seem wont to. . . .
32) Because the British tabloids are the first people since the Nazis to use the word "Slav" as a term of abuse.
33) Because the KLA is funded by drug-trafficking, while the nearest the German Jews ever got to drugs was chicken soup.
34) Because the German Jews didn't want to annex part of Germany and call it Israel-On-The-Rhine.
35) Because last year the British Immigration Office decreed that the Kosovars were not a distinct racial group. (And it's been a damned long time since anyone said that about the Jews.)
36) Because clean-limbed, dirty-minded little WASP girls don't grow up dreaming of marrying a big, handsome, sexy, intellectual Kosovar.
37) Because Germany has agreed to take 40,000 Kosovar Albanian refugees—that's "take", not "kill".
38) Because the Greeks sympathise with the Serbs—and the Greeks always back the right side.
39) Because Israel sympathises with the Kosovars, and Israel always backs the wrong side. (Lovely shot of that Israeli jet flying cheek-to-cheek with the Luftwaffe, lads!)
40) Because Nazis don't win wars—and Serbs don't lose them.

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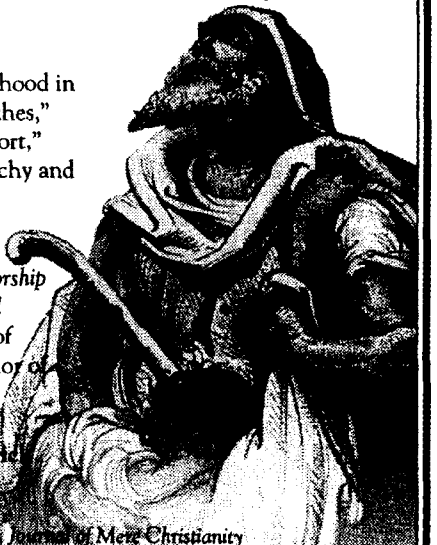

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CH06

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The Road to Regression

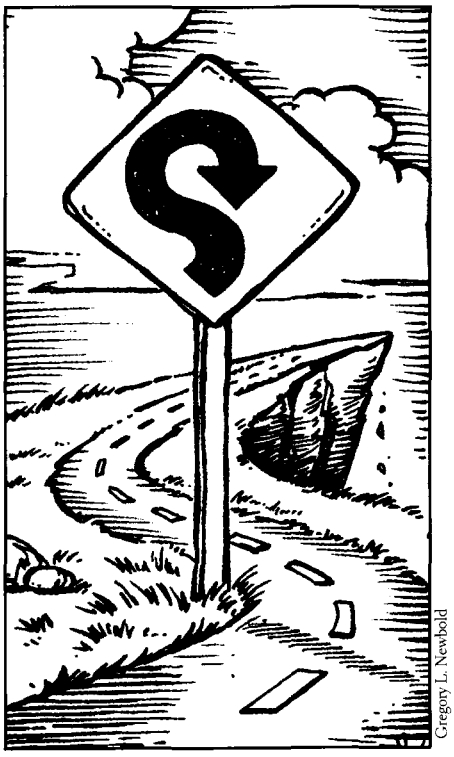
by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

"Every step forward is made at the cost of mental and physical pain to someone."
—Friedrich Nietzsche

With Good Intentions? Reflections on the Myth of Progress in America
by Bill Kauffman
Westport, CT: Praeger;
124 pp., $35.00

◆

Most Americans, whether they know it or not, are already well acquainted with lost causes; as for the rest, they have only to wait, perhaps for just a little while. T.S. Eliot thought no good cause was ever lost—an opinion on which, as with so many other things, the reactionary poet parted company with the political and economic "conservatives" of the past 30 years, who have insisted on "common sense" against "naiveté," "constructive" criticism over the "negative" variety, and "practicality" in favor of "sentimentality." "They never fail who die / In a great cause," Byron wrote—a maxim totally lost on the Republican Party, which believes, rather, "They never fail who live / To wimp another day." If cowardice may have its principles, the honorable assumption here is that "constructive" criticism only can be effectively embodied in "conservative" policy—a question-begging notion if there ever was one. (What is "negative," Miguel de Unamuno wondered, and what is "positive," and how does one tell the difference between them?) More often than not, what people mean by "constructive" is really only "popular"—denoting popularity-on-the-face-of-it, popularity-up-for-grabs: an easy popularity not entailing the blood, sweat, and tears of honest persuasion, the popularity all politicians reach for and prefer, as inner-city residents snatch at welfare and ADC checks. Totally lost on politicians and policy wonks alike is the idea of *testimony*: the act of bearing witness to falsehood and to truth, win or lose. It may well be that, in the present age, the sole function of truly conservative critics is to keep alive an idea of what *should* have been, which perhaps is only another way of explaining to our 20th-century culture the causes of its own demise (as human beings, we should insist on knowing these), while reasserting the cause of the struggling humanity buried beneath it. A prophetic role, in other words; and while there is ground indeed for complaint in the personal misfortune of a prophet's calling (a summons, as Flannery O'Connor said, to expect the worst), there is no reason at all to rate prophecy below policy in the roster of useful occupations.


Gregory L. Newbold

The Moloch against whom Bill Kauffman testifies, in this book as elsewhere, is not the "liberal" bugaboo—more chimerical, in some ways, than Don Quixote's giant that turned out to be a wineskin—that false conservatives have wasted millions of man-hours and billions of dollars attacking but progressivism, a madness greatly worse than the Don's insanity and a type of mental and emotional malady that has gripped the American ruling class on both sides of the Democratic and Republican divide, where the law of gravity has for many years been suspended to allow power to flow downhill on both sides to the District of Columbia.

"The Communist revolution," Marx and Engels wrote, "is carried through by the class which is itself the expression of the dissolution of all classes, nationalities, etc." The class of which they spoke is the class which Stalin credited with imposing "revolution from above"; it is also the one solely responsible for what has been termed—by progressives—the Second American Revolution. Sam Francis, in a brilliant essay printed in this magazine last year, frankly discussed the

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similarities between communism and what (before Mr. Hyde took over Dr. Jekyll entirely) used to be distinguished as neoconservatism—between international communism and global democracy, which are chiefly differentiated at this point in history by the fact of the first having Made In The U.S.S.R. stamped on it, the other Made In The U.S.A. *With Good Intentions?* is valuable not only for its defense of worthy, defunct causes but for the demonstration it provides of just how early in the national game those causes really *were* lost.

The contemporary case against anti-child labor legislation, school consolidation, women's suffrage, the creation of the Interstate Highway System, and the institution of a standing army was made by a coalition of anti-Progressive dissidents of a largely Jeffersonian character: men and women Bill Kauffman describes as "faithful to the old republic, motivated by agrarian biases even when they lived in cities, [whose] bedrocks were (1) family autonomy; (2) a minimal state; and (3) human-scale communities." These "people our forgotten history"; their opponents are the *dramatis personae* of official histories and the forerunners of the Clinton administration, as well as (if we may believe the polls) the 70-plus percent of the American people who believe it will have initiated the American equivalent of the Age of the Antonines, as Bill Clinton steps down after reluctantly acceding to demands to serve a third and fourth term and Senator Hillary is translated into President Hillary. The answer to the assertion, "It can't happen here!" is that it happened here yesterday, and never quit happening throughout the intervening night.

Since the Civil War, really, the Constitution has been ignored or "interpreted" by people having little or no interest in the concerns the Framers had, but loving, rather, what they hated, and hating what they loved: The result is the total revisement of the agendum ratified in 1789. Verily there is nothing new under the sun—though the sun, in its declining age, is expected to burn hotter and hotter. The Child Labor Amendment movement early in the 20th century was dubbed "the crusade for the children" by supporters, many or most of whom believed that family and parent-children relationships required remodeling by the state. "We must limit," the research director of the National Child Labor Council stated, "parental freedom as well as employers' freedom, but the main thing is to strengthen the home—for the children's sake"; an executive official of the same organization, Gertrude Folks Zimand, brushed aside the familiar objection against attempts at legislating morality with the remark, "Laws make morals." As for states' rights considerations, "The issue of states' rights has never been raised on behalf of a good cause," in the opinion of Grace Abbott, head of the Children's Bureau. The crusading Progressive Judge Ben Lindsey of Denver, endorsing a National Child Labor Amendment to the Constitution, popularized the phrase "Government as Overparent," while others cited the rhetorical equivalent of deadbeat dads (the working-class sots who were also the target of the 18th Amendment) as further reason to support this critical piece of forward-looking legislation. "With the Child Labor Amendment," Kauffman writes, "the battle between partisans of the old republic and the new republic was joined." While the amendment itself was defeated, most of the old Palmer Bill's provisions were incorporated by the Fair Labor Standards Act in 1938, thus giving the Progressives most of what they asked for, though not what Kauffman calls the "amendment battering ram" they desired as a weapon with which to break in the door of the poor man's castle. Still,

> Opposition to the amendment had united, in common—and successful—cause, an extraordinary coalition: rural southern Protestants, northern working-class Catholics, antifeminists, localist Progressives, domestic manufacturers, farmers, and Mugwump wisemen. Together, they defeated a measure that had virtually the entire political establishment behind it.

"A pity," Kauffman adds, "that the coalition has never reformed."

Over and again, Kauffman's account is subtly insistent on the contemporary relevance of the terms and substance of the Progressive *versus* anti-Progressive debates. In the context of the argument for school-consolidation in the post-World War II era, Kauffman cites the consolidationists' leading proponent, Dr. James B. Conant, president of Harvard University, as remarking, in a Ripley's Believe-It-Or-Not tone of astonishment, that in the past the state

> was remarkably indifferent as to whether parents chose to take advantage of the educational opportunities offered, and local authorities sometimes were not very strict about enforcing the compulsory attendance laws. . . . As long as the public concern was directed almost exclusively to the education of future voters and the unfolding

Reviewed in this issue!

WITH GOOD INTENTIONS?
Reflections on the Myth of Progress in America
By Bill Kauffman

"In his impassioned explorations of six lost causes . . . . Kauffman advances the losers' arguments cogently, even when, especially in the case of the anti-women suffragists, he disagrees. When he agrees, he is riveting, amusingly vituperative (he dubs New Deal bureaucrat Rexford Guy Tugwell, who scuttled homesteading, 'Tyrantosaurus Rex'), even piquantly ribald." —Booklist

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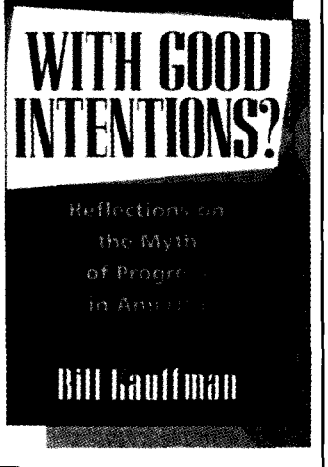

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> of the personality of each child, a thousand different schools might be considered an excellent idea.

"Not many years ago," the great man continued,

> a considerable body of opinion in this country . . . thought that what happened to children was a matter for the parents to decide. The state should not come between a father and his son. . . . These arguments would sound archaic today.

Conant's concern was to consolidate and homogenize the American public school system in the interest of more easily producing generations of properly trained and regimented Cold War men and women—as Russell Kirk, for one, clearly perceived, writing in 1958 that behind "the abolition of rural schools" lay the intent of "breaking down regional and vocational distinctions and producing 'integrated' Americans." Today, the rationale for consolidation is making up to the global economy rather than facing down the Soviet Union. The program, of course, remains the same.

Woman suffrage is unique among the causes discussed in this book for being the single one the author approves of, while holding nonetheless that the anti-suffragists' opposition was healthy, insightful, and valuable, in the long as in the short run. The sanctity of the home was under siege then as now, "and while voting ladies are not the problem [today], Ida Tarbell, Ruth Whitney Lyman, and the Sisters left a trail, long-since overgrown, that might just lead us in a more humane direction." Ruth Lyman, a Massachusetts lady, identified

> [t]he fundamental difference [as] this—that the suffragist (like the socialist) persists in regarding the individual as the unit of society, while the anti-suffragist insists that it is the family. . . . Anti-suffrage is founded upon the conception of co-operation between the sexes. Men and women must be regarded as partners, not competitors; and the family, to be preserved as a unit must be represented as having one political head.

And Emma Goldman—Red Emma, the anarchist—opined that

> Woman, essentially a purist, is naturally bigoted and relentless in her effort to make others as good as she thinks they ought to be. Thus, in Idaho . . . prostitution and gambling have been prohibited. In this regard the law must needs be of feminine gender: it always prohibits.

So many wrongs to right, and so little power (in Bill Kauffman's gloss)! But the antis were encumbered, as he argues, by their own commitment to benignant statism, having themselves promoted the interference of government agents in family relations—Catholic and immigrant families particularly. And so, lacking the "sturdy philosophical base of the traditionalists or the anarchists, they simply collapsed."

Like "the sake of the children," "women's rights," and "better education," "good roads" and a standing army as a contribution to "national defense" seemed incontrovertible goods. For Kauffman, though, the Interstate Highway System (inspired by President Eisenhower's admiration for the Autobahn) stands as a monument "not to capitalist or human action or mechanical genius but to the Leviathan State, whose architects wanted a rootless and hypermobile population," while

> maintenance of a large standing army, especially an army in which men are stationed away from that place which they and their families call home, is a significant factor in the destruction of American family life. Those who support a large standing army do more to undermine American families than do most of the exotic bogeymen of "family values" propaganda.

In both instances—massive road-building programs and a permanent army—progressives typically defend widescale depredations committed against rootedness, regionalism, tradition, the American land, family cohesion, and social memory by appeal to the progressive fetish of "mobility," and even "diversity": "continuous relocations allowed [military children] a broader perspective toward other peoples and races and thereby avoid the prejudicial stereotyping that was presumed or experienced among less mobile populations," according to one military sociologist. "But why," Kauffman wants to know, is mobility considered, axiomatically, to be a good thing—"Why? Why?" Macaulay thought five generations are required to destroy the popular recollection of previous times. If he was right, then today the old American republic scarcely exists even in memory.

Progress and Bill Kauffman are not exactly good drinking buddies in the saloons of Batavia, New York. Even so, the point of his book is not that no highways ought ever to have been built, that females never should have been given the vote.

> But there is a cost—often hidden, unacknowledged—to these advances, and though my own preference is for woman suffrage and against the Interstate Highway System, the anti-Progress critique can encompass both—and can introduce us to a valuable way of thinking about and reckoning change, even if we judge change to be for the best.

My sole reservation regarding *With Good Intentions?* is the absence of a chapter on the close-to-lost cause of the anti-immigration movement, perhaps the most critical of them all.

Bill Kauffman resembles not in the least the stereotypical Don Quixote of popular reference, but he is very like that good knight as Unamuno understood him: less the Knight of the Doleful Countenance than the Knight of the Great Heart, the champion not of literary chivalry but rather of the thing itself, of Heart that refuses to be seduced by Mind: a voice crying in the wilderness where, "though men hear not, the wilderness hears, and one day it will be transformed into a resounding forest. . . ." Kauffman, as a stalwart defender of reactionary radicalism, understands that what his country requires today is not a counterfeit "conservative" party to oppose a supposedly "liberal" one, but a Regressive Party to enter the lists against the existing bipartisan Pan-Progressive behemoth. If and when that actually happens, we will have a political system truly accountable to the American people, after which—watch out! And let the Culture War really begin. ©

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The First Philosophic Age

by Antony Flew

Philosophical Melancholy and Delirium: Hume's Pathology of Philosophy
by Donald W. Livingston
Chicago: University of Chicago Press; 433 pp., $68.00

◆

It can confidently be claimed—and has already been by several reviewers in the philosophers' trade journals—that this book is absolutely indispensable to anyone wanting fully to understand the whole range of Hume's writings. That range includes much more than the *Treatise*, the two *Enquiries*, and the *Dialogues*—the four works normally studied in university courses in philosophy. It is not for nothing, either, that the catalogue of the British Museum Library lists Hume's publications under the heading "David Hume, the historian," or that it is the Liberty Press which has published both the only 20th-century reprint of his *History of England* and what is now the standard edition of his *Essays*.

The present book is perhaps best read after readers have refreshed their memories of the same author's *Hume's Philosophy of Common Life*. That would prepare them to appreciate a considerably more comprehensive conception of philosophy than that which is usual in departments of philosophy throughout the English-speaking world. Here the master problem is that of Hume's answer to the question: "What is philosophy?" This question is construed comprehensively as including such sub-questions as "What is the philosophical life? What is philosophical truth? What is the proper relation of philosophy to religion, to culture, to its own history?"

Part One consists of "Humean Reflections." After an initial chapter asking the kind of question beloved of contemporary English-speaking academic philosophers—"Is Hume an Empiricist?"—Livingston proceeds to chapters on "The Dialectic of True and False Philosophy," "The Origin of the Philosophical Act in Human Nature," "The Ancient Philosophy," "Philosophy and Christendom," "The Modern Philosophy," and "True Philosophy and the Skeptical Tradition." His crucial contention is that, for Hume, the fundamental distinction is not the empiricists' distinction between sensory experience and the interpretation thereof "but the dialectical distinction between two sorts of interpretation: custom and reflection." It is precisely this dialectic which makes Hume, in his own way, the most profoundly conservative of philosophers.

The chapter on "True Philosophy and the Skeptical Tradition" employs an understanding of this dialectic to explain how friends who knew Hume well and supported his applications for chairs of philosophy, first at Edinburgh and later at Glasgow, could have believed, as apparently they did, that (had he been appointed) he would have been able in good conscience to meet the religious demands made on holders of these offices. For, as Livingston tells us, Hume would have been required both to sign the Westminster Confession and regularly to attend church. And at Glasgow, he would also have been required to lead students in prayer.

The next two chapters are concerned with "True Philosophy and Civilization" and "False Philosophy and Barbarism." The second member of this pair includes sections not only on Rousseau but also on "'The Gloomy Enthusiasm' of the Parliamentary Party." It was Hume's insight into the nature of what he called "true philosophy"—first broached in the *Treatise* and revisited in volumes V and VI of his *History* in his interpretation of the English Civil War as an ideological struggle—which led him to conclude that

> the gloomy enthusiasm, which prevailed among the parliamentary party, is surely the most curious spectacle presented by any history; and the most instructive, as well as entertaining to a philosophical mind.

That enthusiasm simply is the autonomy of philosophy in its religious aspect. Hence the fundamental lessons of both volumes V and VI of the *History* and of the dialectic of true and false philosophy in the *Treatise* are the same, namely, that philosophical autonomy cut free from custom entirely subverts itself. (Here it is necessary to recognize, as Livingston is most eager to insist, that the English Civil War is rightly so called since two parties were warring for the control of a single state. By contrast, what is traditionally called—by the winners—the American Civil War instead was, like the American Revolutionary War, a war in which one of the parties wanted to secede from, rather than to acquire control over, the other, which sought to maintain that control.) Hume thought that the English Civil War was unique in history and that it had a special philosophical significance. For the first time

> a mass speculative consciousness had generated mass speculative passions which had the power to overthrow an established political order and which eventually sought to destroy not only the political order but the moral and social order as well, and to replace it with a new one.

As we know, this unique status was not maintained for many years after Hume's death. For the ideas of Rousseau (which, as Livingston makes clear, Hume abhorred) helped to shape the "mass speculative consciousness" which generated "mass speculative passions" having the power to overthrow the established political order of France and to replace it with a truly modern state. This was a republic "one and indivisible" possessing, in the name of the General Will of the nation, total power over both the persons and the property of the citizens.

The remaining two chapters of Part One deal with "English Barbarism: 'Wilkes and Liberty!'" and "English Barbarism: 'The Poor Infatuated Americans.'" The second of these clearly reveals how, and for what reasons, Hume first began to support American secession well before this aim was adopted by most of the future Founding Fathers and, at the time of the Declaration of Independence, was—among all his Edinburgh friends—alone in adopting this position. This same chapter also reveals that one of those friends, the painter Allan Ramsay, advocated a form of total

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war against the secessionist American population. Such total war is, Livingston claims, "possible only among 'civilized' nations. It is shaped and legitimated by an act of reflection, a way of thinking about the world whereby an entire people becomes the enemy." Hence "Lincoln's scorched earth policy and demand for unconditional surrender exhibited a new frame of mind that only eighty years later would reveal itself in the terror bombing of Dresden."

"Part Two: Humean Intimations" consists of four chapters in which Livingston engages in "what Oakeshott called 'the pursuit of intimations.'" The first of these chapters finds inspiration in Hume as "a virtual Founding Father." Livingston contrasts the compact with the nationalist theory of America's founding. The former holds that the Constitution was a compact between sovereign states, delegating enumerated powers to a minimum central government; the latter agrees with Lincoln in his justification for coercing the Confederate states back into the Union: "The Union is older than any of the States, and, in fact, it created them as states." Construed as an historical proposition, this statement is, as Livingston insists, simply false. For the Continental Congress was as much a congress of sovereign states as the Congress of Vienna.

The second chapter in Part Two, "The Right of Resistance: A Humean Free State versus a Modern Consolidated Leviathan," examines Hume's writings in the light of two doctrines essential to the identity of the modern state: the theory of sovereignty and the organic theory of the state. Livingston concludes that no support is to be found there for either of these essential doctrines and derives from this want of support a strong presumption against the modern state in Hume's thought.

The first thing to notice about the modern state is its disposition to centralize and to consolidate smaller social and political units into a larger whole. With consolidation has come an increase in the state's power to command the resources, material and human, within its territory. (The very idea of having "human resources" to exploit is a gift the modern state has seen fit to lavish upon itself.) One measure of this power, which marks a fundamental difference between the modern state and its premodern counterpart, is the authority to impose both income taxation and universal conscription. Livingston points out that it is this enormous increase of state power—to some extent foreseen by Hume and the Old Whigs—which has made possible in our century unprecedentedly destructive wars between individual states as well as massacres, similarly unprecedented in their extent, of their own subjects by controllers of states.

The third chapter of Part Two, "The Right of Resistance: Secession and the Modern State," while perhaps the most freshly stimulating, has the least direct connection with the ideas of Hume. For, as Livingston notices,

> Secession does not appear as a uniquely political concept until the idea of the modern state contains an ethic of self-government (which may easily lead to a demand for secession) *and* a prohibition against secession—for a modern state is one and indivisible.

The final chapter, "Preserving One's Humanity in the First Philosophic Age," contains sections on "Hume and Vico" as well as "Hume and Hegel."

It is, by the way, most misleading to assert that "the European Union has avoided confronting the question of secession," as the promoters of that enterprise are forever insisting that every step in the construction of their centralized and all-controlling European superstate is irreversible.

Antony Flew is professor emeritus at the University of Reading. He has previously published another, different review of this book in the International Philosophical Quarterly.

Invaders of Our Land

by Charles Edward Eaton

The Selected Poems of Wendell Berry
by Wendell Berry
Washington, D.C.: Counterpoint;
178 pp., $20.00

◆

Wendell Berry is, without doubt, the poetic star of environmentalism. I do not know of any other poet of his stature in the present or past who has taken his stand, as the Agrarians said they did, and stood by it so steadfastly into his 60's. In fact, his farmer-poet representation of himself may be his most impressive creation, perhaps more than anything else the source of the attention he has received. Not a bad thing for such a worthy cause. But what about the poetry?

In the first sentence of "The Apple Tree," the first poem in *Selected Poems*, he refers to "the essential prose in things," and we know immediately that he is not going to proceed along the lines of that great sophisticate, Wallace Stevens, who insisted on "the essential gaudiness of poetry." An approximation of this dichotomy runs through American prose and poetry, the two sides knitting back and forth, correcting each other's excesses, and we can be grateful that the fabric of American meaning is so varied and rich in texture and design.

Specifically, there are 100 poems in *Selected Poems*, taken from nine of Berry's 14 listed books of poetry. To me, the long poems are the best, for, with some exceptions, the short ones do not give us "the immortal wound from which you will never recover," as Robert Frost said, and did in such classics as "Nothing Gold Can Stay," "Fire and Ice," and "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening."

Berry hits his stride with "The Design of a House" and the sequence "Window Poems," a real *tour de force* and one of my favorite pieces in the collection. It is a perfect subject for a careful observer like Berry: "This is the mind's eye, / Wendell's window. . . . The country opens to the sky / the eye purified among hard facts. . . . The window is a form / of consciousness, pattern / of formed sense / through which to look / into the wild / that is a pattern too, / but dark and flowing. . . . The window becomes a part / of his mind's history, the entrance / of days into it. . . . The window is a fragment / of the world suspended in the world, the known / adrift in mystery, / and now the green / rises. The window has an edge / that is celestial, / where the eyes are surpassed."

I respond to these poems as a kind of hymn to the earth, all the deeper for being limited and focused by how much one man at any given time can see from his window—an intense "fragment." In a way, this sequence is also a paradigm of his poetry: Every window looks out on a

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small portion of actuality which can be meditated on and explored. Windows can work wonders, the protected, projective process, the gift received and returned. One recalls the brilliant window paintings of Pierre Bonnard and Henri Matisse, and remembers what a useful metaphor the window is for any artist.

The overall tone of the collection is elegiac and admonitory, and why would it not be for a poet who so loves the land and the historic presence on it and has seen so much of it desecrated and disavowed? I said in an essay ("Donald Davidson and the Dynamics of Nostalgia") in the *Georgia Review* that nostalgia is one of the valid ways of looking at life, particularly in the 20th century. Davidson, who was also at his best in his long poems, made a compelling case of how, looking backward, we may be persuaded to change and look forward. Berry, in fact, is more like him, though their styles and techniques are different, than like any of the other Agrarians, Ransom, Tate, and Warren, who abandoned their stand and went on to what they considered more tenable and richer endeavors, wearing their high art and erudition on their sleeves. They can be said, finally, to have been "aristocratic" in their outlook, and the democracy around them, not yielding to their pressures, left them nowhere to go except back to art itself, which they proceeded to analyze, defend, and create with brilliance. But Davidson stayed on, stayed firm about his beliefs, a perfect and poignant example of a fugitive from contemporary America who, in the midst of his regret, had some wise things to say about it. Berry is less plaintive and wistful than Davidson, but the big difference is that he "went to ground," literally and figuratively, to test his argument in actual experience.

Such commitment takes a good deal of courage when people of your own age are deserting the farms in droves, and it sets up conflict and tension in the poet. The alien world seeps in despite careful screening, and, when it does, Berry can sound curiously like Robinson Jeffers, though he does not have Jeffers' long, sweeping lines and opulent rhetoric. "Dark with Power" and the poem that follows it, "The Want of Peace," illustrate that the farmer-poet has something in common with the brooding sage of the West:

Dark with power, we remain
the invaders of our land, leaving
deserts where forests were,
scars where there were hills.

On the mountains, on the rivers,
on the cities, on the farmlands
we lay weighted hands, our breath
potent with the death of all things.

Pray to us, farmers and villagers
of Vietnam. Pray to us, mothers
and children of helpless countries.
Ask for nothing.

We are carried in the belly
of what we have become
toward the shambles of our
triumph,
far from the quiet houses.

Fed with dying, we gaze
on our might's monuments of fire.
The world dangles from us
while we gaze.

This deep look into the darkness is heartening in a poet who may seem to those of a different persuasion a bit too confident and "convinced." Another shock of recognition of the otherness of things comes in a fine poem, "Meditation in the Spring Rain," about "crazy old Mrs. Gaines" who was kept intermittently in a cage built for her by her family in a "shadowy country / that she knew, holding a darkness that was past / and a darkness to come," her tragicomic shibboleth, "One Lord, one Faith, and one Cornbread." Berry identifies with her, and says, "For I too am perhaps a little mad, / standing here wet in the drizzle, listening / to the clashing syllables of the water. Surely / there is a great Word being put together here. . . . For a time there / I turned away from the words I knew, and was lost. / For a time I was lost and free, speechless / in the multitudinous assembling of his Word."

Farm policy falls away in the depths of such "shadowy country." As we all try to synthesize our lives, we are called on not to be too sure, remembering Goethe's "Gray is all Theory, only the Tree of Life is green." Berry understands this too, and not infrequently his point of view, free of the programmatic, flourishes, deepens, into love, passion, even a quiet ecstasy, and this is when his poetry is most vital. It is hard not to go along with his credo as he states it in "The Man Born to Farming," one of the best short poems:

The grower of trees, the gardener,
the man born to farming
Whose hands reach late into the
ground and sprout,
to him the soil is a divine drug. He
enters into death
and comes back rejoicing. He has
seen the light lie down
in the dung heap, and rise again in
the corn.
His thought passes along the row
ends like a mole.
What miraculous seed has he
swallowed
that the unending sentence of his
love flows out of his mouth
like a vine climbing in the sun-
light, and like water
descending in the dark?

It is not easy to quote from Berry since, as I have said, most of his best poems are long, and it is the whole performance that counts. Consequently, I should at least mention for the reader's interest and delectation those long poems I particularly admire in addition to "Window Poems": "To a Siberian Woodsman," "History," "The Country of Marriage," and "Testament."

For a poet who often reminds one of a character in an old-fashioned novel, Berry's prosody, by contrast, is modern, even of the moment, employing mainly short lines, and with capitals only at the beginning of sentences that have suppleness and grace, only now and then stubbing their toes on the too prosaic. He owes a good deal of his rhythm and movement to William Carlos Williams, who seems to have fathered this kind of verse in many of today's poets, and, in fact, late in the book there is a poem (which was, incidentally, originally published in *Chronicles*) entitled "In a Motel Parking Lot, Thinking of Dr. Williams."

By contrast, and helping to balance this effect, several poems, notably "Testament," "The Clear Days," and "Requiem," show that Berry can handle rhyme and meter. These are welcome if for no other reason than that they vary the tone of the book, reminding us that Robert Frost said one of the reasons for writing poems was to make them "all sound different."

Frost, not only in prosody but in *persona*, is an interesting contrast to Berry. Frost was my teacher at Harvard and a friend until his death, and I had an opportunity to observe him at close quarters. He lived on a farm off and on and

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was, in his words, "versed in country things," but he was not *immersed*, the impression given by Berry in his poetry and in biographical accounts. As a matter of fact, Frost told me that he had hated doing the chores and fled the country as a working farmer as soon as he could, using the countryside for the rest of his life as a storehouse of subjects and metaphors. Even early on, he must have realized that the future did not belong to the small farms and that the artist must perhaps satisfy himself with "a lover's quarrel with the world."

As to the final import and impact of the book, I find Berry a kindred spirit. I believe in his agricultural, which is really also a cultural, agenda: the traditional values of love of the land, marriage, family, ethical behavior, etc. Alas, if it were only shared by America and the world, or implied in the future. In "Horses," a remarkable poem near the end of the book, he gives us a picture of himself as a boy when horses were still used in farming and he learned with delight "the other tongue / by which men spoke to beasts," but by the time he had learned the older kind of farming,

> new ways had changed the time.
> The tractors came. The horses
> stood in the fields, keepsakes,
> grew old and died. Or were sold
> for dogmeat. Our minds received
> the revolution of machines . . .

Nevertheless, coming to manhood, the boy remembers and, almost in ecstasy, begins to farm with a team-drawn plow on his difficult, sloping land: "A dance / is what this plodding is. / A song, whatever is said."

But the tractors did come, and they have never left. This is the essential tragedy of Berry's life encapsulated, and one sees him as a special case, a unique kind of farmer-poet who may never come along again. His faith is a romantic, nostalgic vision with the startling difference that he has somehow put an invisible wall around that farm in Kentucky and *lived* his dreams. Berry looks out of his window and sees a great deal accurately and beautifully, but as to its implications for actual, modern America, he sees what he wants to see. I am reminded of Flaubert's ironic commentary that he had always tried to live in an ivory tower, but *une marée de merde* kept beating at the walls, threatening to undermine them. It is fine, noble, and appealing to argue the cause of the farmers, but how many of them can live the life of Wendell Berry in a world that is more and more awash in Flaubert's oceanic invasion?

Still, the farmer-poet in Kentucky holds our attention and respect. "Lost causes" are never lost if they are good in themselves. Berry's basic devotion to the earth could, and should, be followed in whatever modest manifestation the individual can muster—a garden plot if need be, where he, too, can feel "the current flowing to him through the earth," and imagine that the hand he thrusts in the soil is grasped in communion by the hand of the earth.

Charles Edward Eaton's 14th collection of poetry, The Scout in Summer, *is due out shortly from Cornwall Books.*

A Pretense of Knowledge

by Ralph de Toledano

The Haunted Wood: Soviet Espionage in America—The Stalin Era
by Allen Weinstein and Alexander Vassiliev
New York: Random House; 420 pp., $30.00

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In recent years, there has been a spate of valuable books on Soviet espionage, subversion, and penetration of the West—books inspired or prompted by the opening of Soviet secret files, the publication of the Venona intercepts (communications between Soviet agents and Moscow), and the writings of former KGB officials. Among these are Stephen Koch's *Double Lives*, John Costello's *Deadly Illusions* and *Mask of Treachery*, and the Harvey Klehr-John Haynes documentary, *The Secret World of American Communism*, and its sequels. To these should be added the documentation of Whittaker Chambers' epochal *Witness* and lesser memoirs by other participants in the greatest plot in history, buttressed by the reportorial works of dedicated historians and journalists.

Into this crowded but fascinating field comes Allen Weinstein's *The Haunted Wood*, the title of which—paraphrasing Dante's *selva oscura*—seems to bring depth and insight to the account of Soviet perfidy. Professor Weinstein, though a Johnny-Come-Lately in the field, was praised extravagantly for *Perjury*, an excellent wrap-up of the Hiss case, which he began as a liberal defender of Alger Hiss and completed in the conviction of the man's incontrovertible guilt. *The Haunted Wood* purports to be an overview of the crowded world of Soviet espionage, focusing on the assault upon the West which began when Feliks Dzerzhinsky organized the Cheka (subsequently the GPO, the NKVD, and the KGB) and which was continued by the Red Army's GRU and Willie Muenzenberg's vast Communist International (Comintern) *apparat*.

When *Perjury* was written, the parameters of the Hiss case and its protagonists had been established, and Weinstein's professorial approach guaranteed that it would be taken seriously even by those who seemed to have sworn eternal fealty to Alger Hiss. An account like *The Haunted Wood*, however, requires background not from research among the archives, library shelves, and newspaper clippings, but from an empathetical contact with those who experienced the trauma and dissociation of existence in the GRU, the KGB, and/or the Comintern: The complex psychological and ideological drives leading to participation in the communist netherworld are as important as the factual documentation. Otherwise, what appears on the printed page is superficial and incomplete. Though Alexander Vassiliev, Professor Weinstein's collaborator, has brought to *The Haunted Wood* some of the archival facts behind well-known cases, he has somehow failed to preserve the juices. A broad overview of the twists and turns of Soviet policies and operations is also required, and a divorcement from liberal shibboleths.

When Professor Weinstein characterizes as "passivity" the Red Army's wait on the banks of the Vistula until the Nazis had completed their slaughter of the Polish freedom fighters in Warsaw, he betrays either callousness or gross ignorance. For this delay was not "passivity" but the result of Stalin's deliberate determination to destroy all elements which would have resisted the sovietization of Poland. Yet "passivity" is indeed demonstrated by Professor Weinstein when he

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blandly states that Laurence Duggan, a member of the Soviet *apparat* in the State Department, "jumped or fell" from a 16th-story window in New York—clearly a defenestration (much like Jan Masaryk's in Prague) to prevent him from corroborating the testimony of Whittaker Chambers and Elizabeth Bently.

The Haunted Wood is subtitled *Soviet Espionage in America—The Stalin Era.* However, it merely scratches the surface of what was already known, while failing to add anything substantive to our knowledge of the subject. Nowhere is there any mention of, say, Arthur Alexandrovitch Adams, a ranking Soviet espionage agent, who entered the United States on the very day in the early 1930's that Maxim Litvinov, in acknowledging U.S. diplomatic recognition of the U.S.S.R., promised President Roosevelt that Soviet espionage and subversion would cease. Adams set up major Soviet espionage rings in the United States, among them the *apparat* from which grew the atomic spy ring of which J. Robert Oppenheimer was a part.

There is little in the Weinstein *opus* about these germinal activities. And of the first blockbusting case—the defection of GRU Lt. Igor Gouzenko with documents which shook the complacency of Canada, Britain, and the United States, leading to meetings between Prime Minister Mackenzie King and President Truman—there is nothing at all, other than the simple statement that Lt. Gouzenko defected. Gouzenko's assertion to me (as the first newsman to interview him) that there were *nine* Soviet spy rings operating in the United States seems to have escaped Professor Weinstein and his collaborator, who are also not interested in Gouzenko's later disclosure that Lester Pearson—Canadian foreign secretary and later prime minister—was one of the Soviet Union's own.

The Haunted Wood ignores entirely the notorious *Amerasia* case, involving the theft of some 1,700 secret documents from every sensitive government agency with the exception of the FBI, which led to an even more notorious whitewash by President Truman's attorney general, Tom Clark. ("Journalistic zeal," the Justice Department told the court.) Of Owen Lattimore, there is not a word, nor of the brigade of Soviet agents who hung out at the Institute of Pacific Relations. Though he has Flora Lewis's *Red Pawn* in his bibliography, Professor Weinstein finds it unnecessary to describe Noel Field's role in the Office of Strategic Services (or his role as Judas Goat in Stalin's postwar "liquidations" in Hungary), though he is fully aware of Field's activities as an espionage agent in Washington. In the case of the OSS, of course, we are given little clue to the Soviets' thorough penetration of it, though Weinstein does scatter a few names about. Yet the most sensitive of sections, the Central European desk of the OSS, was staffed almost totally by Herbert Marcuse and the Comintern's International Institute of Social Research (the "Frankfurt School") which worked through Noel Field—and, after the war, through U.S. occupation authorities—in an effort to deliver postwar Germany to the Soviet Union. And there is nothing of how field operations were conducted by Major Milton Wolff and his fellow veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, their hands still bloody from Stalin's purges during the Spanish Civil War. These are but a few of Professor Weinstein's sins of omission. He must be credited, however, for devoting over 29 pages to the comedic case of Boris Morros, a minor Hollywood producer, who played no significant role in the major espionage and infiltration operations while thoroughly conning the Soviet secret services into setting him up in business and separating them from some minor amounts of cash.

As the author of *Perjury*, Allen Weinstein should have had the last authoritative word on Alger Hiss, in particular on his activities in the 1940's and 1950's. Yet we are not told of his delivery to a leftish columnist of the secret British order of battle in the Greek postwar hostilities, thereby forcing British forces to withdraw and compelling President Truman to substitute American troops. Or of how the Hiss report to the United Nations—describing Panama as a "colony"—almost blew us out of the water in Latin America and contributed to our subsequent loss of the Panama Canal.

The Haunted Wood does enhance accounts of well-known cases with material drawn from Soviet secret archives. And for those who had their heads buried in the sand during the Cold War, or relied on the liberal press, there is some new information. For others, better grounded in the great game of foxes (as Ladislas Farrago called it), Weinstein's book can provide little more than added affirmation that the Soviets, aided and abetted by Americans in and out of government, spied with impunity while the nation slept. While the full story is slowly emerging, through the Venona intercepts as well as the partial opening of Soviet KGB archives, much of it remains to be told—which is why even so thin an account as *The Haunted Wood* is of value.

Ralph de Toledano is the author, most recently, of Notes From the Underground: The Whittaker Chambers-Ralph de Toledano Correspondence: 1949-1960.

It Takes Smarm

by J.O. Tate

Dear Socks, Dear Buddy:
Kids' Letters to the First Pets
by Hillary Rodham Clinton
New York: Simon & Schuster;
203 pp., $20.00

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Anyone entertaining an unpleasant thought about the Clinton White House is almost certainly a victim of the "vast right-wing conspiracy" which Mrs. Clinton (formerly Ms. Rodham-Clinton) has blamed for her husband's travails. For many years, the Clintons have used the word "children" as an odd euphemism for "government," Joycelyn Elders and Marian Wright Edelman being but the best known of their associates in this regard. In any case, Mrs. Clinton, woman of letters, is back, following up her compelling *It Takes a Village* with the present remarkable volume, which will set to rest any unwarranted suspicions or hostilities, and by the surest of methods. *Dear Socks, Dear Buddy* should allay whatever fears or apprehensions the public may have entertained about the sinister mentality of the First Family.

In the first place, no reader need be concerned that any profits from *Dear Socks, Dear Buddy* will be diverted to the many legal defense funds of the President, the First Lady, or their allies. The proceeds will go directly to the National Park Foundation, because Mrs. Clinton is devoted to the integrity of the nation, to historic preservation, and to the main-

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tenance of national memory. In short, she thinks like a matriarch. She is selflessly devoted to the transgenerational sense of our country and voices only the noblest of patriotic sentiments. Though Mrs. Clinton presents herself as a First Lady through and through, some may be as disappointed as I was that she did not choose to reveal her secret method for making a 10,000 percent profit on an investment in one year. (No doubt she will answer that, and many other questions, in her *next* book.) We just have to remember that *this* book was devoted to kids' letters to the First Pets. Let's try to stay focused, shall we?

Secondly, *Dear Socks, Dear Buddy* is definitely the best book about kids' letters to Socks and Buddy that I have ever seen. I don't mean that all the letters are here—it's just a vibrant sampling of a vast outpouring. But before I dispense some enticing quotes, I think it would be nice to stop and think about how many letters there were, and how nice it was of Mrs. Clinton to let the veterans at the U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home in Washington handle all the mail and answer the letters, and how nice again to let us know how nice she was. There aren't any nasty letters here, thank goodness, of the "How come you SOBs don't go back where you came from? Signed, Dave" variety, or of the "Why they so many Lisbeans in yo cabinette?" stripe, or of the "Socks and Buddy ain't the only animals in the White House" ilk. The letters from our nation's selected children are sweet, humorous, and kindhearted. The texts could only be properly appreciated by the unredeemed Ebenezer Scrooge, but on the whole it's nice to know that this is a book that anyone can read without getting all upset, and you don't even have to read much because there are so many pictures of Bill and Hillary in intimate family snapshots, in color.

Mrs. Clinton does *not* say, either because she could not do so without inviting horse laughs or because she just did not want to, that there is much here to invite a sense of pride in the nation's parents and teachers. The triviality of thought and the illiteracy of much of the expression in the letters does not bode well for the future of the nation that Mrs. Clinton cares so much about. She does say, "What touches me most about the letters is how much the children give of themselves." I wish she had been able to say, "Our children have mastered the elements of orthography, grammar, and rhetoric. Besides that, they are serious youngsters, properly concerned with our culture and civilization." The evidence is otherwise. Perhaps Mrs. Clinton simply thinks that "giving of themselves" means "revealing their lack." Or maybe what she is thinking is that in ten years these "children" will be "voters."

These young students seem not to take school very seriously, and I don't know why they should. Aimee Buchanan writes, "The stuff I like in school is math, lunch, music, gym and trips. We went to a show and it was fun. We ate lunch before we went and we went on a bus. We watch TV in school."

Looking for any irony or discursive reflection among the letters is unrewarding, but Anna Campbell makes a stab at providing some: "Does the president drink a lot of coffee? He might want to switch to decafe!

"Ha! Ha!"

Gregory Kohl's closing question to Socks brings a welcome gothic element: "have you ever seen the Gohst of lincoln?"

The most tragic letter is from Willy DeCamp, addressed to Socks. "Is it nice living at the Whitehouse? I used to have a Dog but we had to sell it because it scratched a little boy on a tricycle then the police officer."

Emily Forden asks Buddy an astute question: "Do you help the president make new laws and goverment decisions?" And Jillian McGaffigan, referring to cat/dog conflict, uses the suggestive word "JELLUS," which should have been stricken from this volume for reasons needless to relate.

So here is my third point (I've been counting). There is little spark in these letters. The subtextual interest in *Dear Socks, Dear Buddy* is in Mrs. Clinton and her projection of an idyllic home life in the White House, which is somehow related to a vision of the nation that is at once kitschy-koo nice-ums and imperial. She cannot write many words (if, in fact, she writes any at all) without references to her own virtue or to the government which she seems to have confused with those powers formerly attributed to the Deity, citing it as the authority on education, literacy, writing, and pet care. (Mrs. Clinton recommends neutering without exception for all pets, which I thought a bit much until I remembered how that policy jibes with others concerning "reproductive services.")

I don't doubt for a second that *Dear Socks, Dear Buddy* is a provocative look at hot-button issues, written with bold frankness by a woman who once scorned baking cookies and standing by her man. Made over on a recent cover of *Vogue*, Hillary Rodham Clinton knows how to manipulate the American public. What *Dear Socks, Dear Buddy* tells me—in its nuanced, piquant, poignant, starry-eyed, heartfelt, and cornfed way—is that the non-author of this non-book is running for office.

J.O. Tate is a professor of English at Dowling College on Long Island.

Kind Words on a Thursday

by Constance Rowell Mastores

It seems that thoroughly modern verse,
at odds with rhyme and reason,
has been exceedingly short with us—
or long for that very reason.

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by Samuel Francis

Politics Without a Right

It took only a few days after the rout of the Republicans in their battle to drive Bill Clinton from office for the leaders of the Beltway Right to decide that the war was over and the only thing left to do was announce surrender. Four days after the Senate "acquitted" the President of the two charges on which he had been impeached, the grand marshal of the Beltway Right himself, Paul Weyrich, seemed ready to limp toward Appomattox. In a letter privately circulated to friends and allies, Mr. Weyrich declared that the political conservatism he has led since the 1970's has been a failure and that the premises on which it was founded are now (if they had not always been) wrong. The news that Mr. Weyrich had given up was in fact somewhat exaggerated, but that was the conclusion to which the left and not a few on the right immediately leapt, and frankly there was not very much in Mr. Weyrich's letter to contradict it.

Paul Weyrich, of course, was a major founder and leader of the "New Right" of the 1970's, a movement that sought to differentiate itself from the "Old Right" by devising a populist political strategy, invoking explicit moral and religious issues, shunning (or at least de-emphasizing) philosophical rigor and sophistication, and insisting that political victory was not only possible but also necessary and sufficient for the achievement of conservative goals.

Under Mr. Weyrich's direction or with his collaboration, the New Right actually did accomplish a good deal more, on a practical political level and for a brief time, than the right associated with Robert Taft, Barry Goldwater, and the "conservative intellectual movement" had in previous decades. Yet the 15 minutes of fame the New Right enjoyed came to an end rather more quickly than most of its apostles expected and certainly sooner than they wanted.

The main problem with the New Right, as with most political movements that bark their contempt for serious thought, was its intellectual shallowness. I distinctly recall, in the late 1970's, talking to a young lady closely associated with the New Right who had recently returned from her first visit to the Philadelphia Society, at that time one of the more intellectually interesting organizations of the Old Right. She told me she had enjoyed the visit and meeting the nice people there, but she didn't understand the point of "sitting around talking about whether Edmund Burke would have agreed with Thomas Aquinas and that sort of stuff."

No, indeed, the New Right had no time for such idle froth as Burke and Aquinas. Its leaders were made of sterner stuff than the limp-wristed eggheads who were always gushing quotations from dead Greek philosophers. There were congressional and presidential elections to win, policies to implement, and legislation to pass, and, as one prominent New Right leader announced publicly soon afterward, "There'll be time enough for reading books when we're all in jail."

One result of the New Right's contempt for intellectualism, of course, was that neither its leaders nor its followers ever thought through the slogans and truisms they spouted well enough to understand that they often were implicitly jettisoning or undercutting other ideas of the right or that their own pronouncements might soon become obstacles to fulfilling other, longer-term goals and political and cultural objectives. Another result, arising from the first, was that the whole New Right movement was rather quickly captured by the neoconservatives, at least insofar as the latter wished to absorb it. Lacking the intellectual foundations for perceiving, let alone resisting, the far less radical ideas of neoconservatism and scornful of anyone who suggested laying such foundations, the New Right, by the mid-1980's, had ceased to exist as a distinct political movement. In 1984, when Irving Kristol's manifesto of neoconservatism, *Reflections of a Neoconservative*, was published, it was Mr. Weyrich himself who, reviewing it in the Heritage Foundation's *Policy Review*, hailed the book as "a vital moral force in America" and crowed that several passages "come closer to a general statement of what some in the New Right strain of conservatism believe than anything else in popular print." If there was any one broker of the marriage of the New Right with neoconservatism, it was Mr. Weyrich himself.

Today, after 15 years of neoconservative dominance of almost the whole of the American right, Mr. Weyrich bellies up to the bar to inform us that the war is over and "we" lost. The reason "we" lost, he tells us in his February letter,

> is that politics itself has failed. And politics has failed because of the collapse of the culture. The culture we are living in becomes an ever-wider sewer. In truth, I think we are caught up in a cultural collapse of historic proportions, a collapse so great that it simply overwhelms politics.

Whether "we" have lost or not, however, Mr. Weyrich is in large part correct in what he says about the relationship of culture and politics, and indeed no magazine has drummed that message more than *Chronicles*. In 1991, I wrote in this magazine that "in the absence of a significant cultural base," conservative political efforts "were bound to fail." I do not quote this passage to prove that I was right while Mr. Weyrich was wrong (in fact, Mr. Weyrich was talking about the importance of "cultural conservatism" in the late 1980's) but mainly to show that the failure of the right he now laments and acknowledges was predictable years before it actually occurred. Perhaps (indeed, probably) Mr. Weyrich himself saw or was beginning to see that some time before he wrote his letter last February, but most others did not, and many still don't. Some conservatives even continue to imagine that their "movement" has actually won. As Paul Gottfried has written, if this is "victory," I really don't want to see what defeat is like.

I have no disagreement with Mr. Weyrich, then, in his conclusion that the right has lost and that it lost because it failed to find or create an adequate cultural base for political success. I would perhaps go further than he and suggest that the reason it has failed to do so is that (partly through Mr. Weyrich's help) the right fell under the control of neoconservatism, and neoconservatism has never been willing to break with the dominant culture definitively or to ally itself with-

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out reservation to the authentic American culture that the super-culture dominates and seeks to destroy. Hence, any suggestion of cultural and political radicalism by the Old Right or the New toward the goals of uprooting the dominant culture has been greeted by the neoconservatives as "extremist," "reactionary," "racist," "antisemitic," or "anti-American." That is how they greeted *Chronicles*, as well as Pat Buchanan in the 1980's and 90's. That is also how they greeted their own colleague Fr. Richard John Neuhaus and the symposium his magazine *First Things* published in 1996 on the "end of democracy," and, not surprisingly, that is how they greeted Mr. Weyrich's letter last February.

Thus *Wall Street Journal* neocon columnist Paul Gigot, in a column entitled "New Right Now Sounds Like Old Left," calls Mr. Weyrich's letter "anti-American" for suggesting that American culture is corrupt and for "blaming America first." When neocons talk about "America," what they mean is the soft managerial regime that has evolved since the New Deal, what the late Murray Rothbard called the "welfare-warfare state," and when they compare people on the right to the "Old Left" (the same charge was made against *Chronicles* and later Pat Buchanan), they mean that the right is as anti-American as George McGovern and Ramsey Clark. While they may dislike or have some reservations about the exact contours and content of the next metamorphosis of the managerial state into the New World Order, neoconservatives generally have much more of a problem with radicals of the right working to reverse the direction of history than with forces of the left pushing history "forward."

Mr. Weyrich, however, appears to think that political conservatism has failed not because it has neglected the authentic American culture but because that culture itself is corrupt or has withered. He now asserts that "I do not believe that a majority of Americans actually shares our values" and that "if there really were a moral majority out there, Bill Clinton would have been driven out of office months ago." But the failure to dump Clinton proves very little, and there are several other reasons why it occurred. Mr. Weyrich himself acknowledges one—"the lack of political will on the part of Republicans"—but there are others: the inability of the "moral majority" (if that's the right term for it) to mobilize its political will in a society where national political expression has become largely a monopoly of the dominant culture; the fact that many Americans, while not approving of Mr. Clinton's sex life, believe he has been a good President who has kept the economy strong; and lastly, the failure of the self-proclaimed opposition to Mr. Clinton—the conservative movement—to persuade most Americans that the President should be dumped.

Two reflections emerge from considering Mr. Weyrich's lamentations about the Waterloo of the right. In the first place, almost every complaint he lodges against what he thinks is the moral wreckage of American society, the "ever-wider sewer" in which he seems to think most Americans are wallowing, is in fact a complaint against the dominant culture. "Even now," he writes, entirely truthfully,

> for the first time in their lives, people have to be afraid of what they say. This has never been true in the history of our country. Yet today, if you say the "wrong thing," you suddenly have legal problems, political problems, you might even lose your job or be expelled from college. Certain topics are forbidden. You can't approach the truth about a lot of different subjects. If you do, you are immediately branded as "racist," "sexist," "homophobic," "insensitive," or "judgmental."

But as correct as this passage is, it is still a complaint against the dominant culture, not the traditional one. People get fired for expressing forbidden thoughts in universities, corporations, TV networks, and newspapers, but not at locally owned and operated farms, schools, and businesses. Mr. Weyrich does not cite a single instance to support his claim that "Americans have adopted in large measure the MTV culture that we so valiantly opposed just a few years ago."

Secondly, one should also reflect that, among the alternative reasons suggested above for the failure to dump Clinton, the most important have to do simply with the failure of the political right. The "majority," whether moral or not, never does much of anything; elites—minorities—always rule, and this is as true of organized conservatism as of organized socialism and communism. The elite of organized conservatism in the United States for the last 20 years has been the neoconservative-dominated "conservative movement," in which Mr. Weyrich and his New Rightists were captains, and when he complains that "Americans have adopted the MTV culture" and ceased to be moral, one has to suspect that the problem is not that the majority of Americans have ceased to be moral but that the majority just doesn't pay much attention to Paul Weyrich and the "movement" he helped create. The majority has paid little attention to the movement's insistence that it was Ronald Reagan, not Bill Clinton, who fixed the economy and destroyed communism so that we no longer have to go to war against it; the majority has paid little attention to the concoction of conspiracy theories, pornographic speculation, and thinly masked partisan gloating that has characterized the clumsy conservative crusade against Mr. Clinton; and the majority has displayed very little interest in submitting to the political leadership of the "conservative movement" or anyone associated with it. The majority, to put it quite bluntly, pays no attention whatsoever to organized conservatism, and it does not do so for a very good reason: The kind of conservatism that has come to prevail in the United States over the last generation—neoconservatives and their unemployable children and in-laws, the Beltway Right, and the flying squadrons of semi-literate "New Right" bumpkins—has virtually nothing to say worth paying attention to.

If the campaign to dump Bill Clinton is a flop, that's too bad, but the nation will survive it. What the nation cannot survive is a politics without a right—at least a right in opposition but, one would hope, also a right that is able to become the dominant force in national politics and culture. Mr. Weyrich is correct that today the nation doesn't have a right of that kind and that the one it does have is a total and absolute dud. He's not correct that the absence or failure of the right is the fault of the American majority or proof of the collapse of the real American culture: It's the fault of the right itself and of the course on which the organized right has been traveling for the last decade. Mr. Weyrich himself helped place it on that course. If he has now learned how to redirect it onto a more fruitful one, he will have something useful to tell us in the future. ·c

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Letter From Banausia

by Michael McMahon

The Aptly Named Woodhead

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Lovers of Gilbert and Sullivan will not need to be reminded that the second act of *The Gondoliers* is set in "Barataria," a fictional land which is ruled by "a monarchy that's tempered with republican equality." The opera satirizes the inflexible social order of Victorian society by turning it on its head and mocking the no-less-absurd result. The plot, of course, is resolved by events as improbable as they are comic: Everyone is happy at the end.

Lovers of learning could be forgiven for thinking that, if W.S. Gilbert were alive today, he would surely write a story set in "Banausia," a tyranny that's tempered with—and mediated through—the illusion of educational equality. That, too, would be the story of a world turned upside-down, intellectually and culturally. It would be the story of contemporary English education. And Gilbert would have to strain his comic vision to its limit to come up with a happy ending.

Why "Banausia"? Because in an exact inversion of the values of ancient Athens, those who rule contemporary Britain have respect only for the practical outcomes of education. In fact, for all their use of the E-word—the prime minister's scriptwriters have instructed him never to mention it without repeating it twice thereafter—few contemporary politicians of any influence show any sign of having the faintest idea what it means. When Mr. Blair says—again, and again, and again—that his priorities are "Education, Education, Education," he is not speaking about education at all, but of training: of drudges, by drudges, for drudgery.

If anyone were ever to doubt this, he need only look at the brass plate on the front door of what used to be called the Ministry of Education. It is now styled the "Department for Education [as if, on the evidence, anyone might think it was agin' it] and Employment." The question "Why do we have education?" is both posed and answered on that plaque. Is it to liberate the mind, to hand on the cultural inheritance, and to pursue knowledge and understanding for its own sake? No: It is to prepare our children for work. That's why double-minister David Blunkett is flogging a utilitarian two-horse chariot, and that is why the elegant, independent-spirited thoroughbred of Learning has been put out to whatever scant grass it can find.

But things are far worse than this. What has happened in England is not just the debasement of education. It has not merely been diminished; it has been perverted—skillfully, and for a political purpose. Education is no longer an independent field of human activity supported and encouraged by the government, but a tightly controlled medium through which that government exercises power—over the future, as well as the present. Alan Ryan, warden of New College, Oxford, puts it concisely: "It's all about control, punishment, inspection, telling people how to do things." There is still an educational elite, of course, though it is no longer made up of the learned, but of the powerful—those who control education from without. Learning has fallen victim to a kind of secular Erastianism in which the greater is subordinated to the lesser. Schools are no longer expected to be self-renewing fountains of learning, where educated teachers re-invest their knowledge and wisdom in society; they are to be anti-intellectual boot camps in which a state-scripted curriculum is delivered.

In every primary school in the land, an hour is now spent teaching "literacy"—what we used to call reading and writing—from a script so detailed that almost the only variation permitted is in the names of the children in the class. Starting next year, mathematics will be taught in the same way. Throughout the rest of primary and secondary schooling, the national curriculum dictates precisely what will be taught, and the omnipotent, inquisitorial malice of the inspectorate makes sure it is taught in precisely the way the government wants.

This passion for centralized uniformity is boundless. At one comic extreme, the government has commissioned a normative scheme of decoration and furnishing for staff rooms—even though teachers these days hardly have time to enter them except to clear their bulging pigeonholes of obscenely wasteful quantities of paperwork. At the other, more sinisterly, it has allocated one billion pounds to a computerization program ("one of the largest committed by any government in the world") that will connect every school to what it calls a "National Grid for Learning," so that teachers and pupils can access Whitehall-approved lesson plans and learning materials. Launching the scheme last November, ministers were anxious to point out that they were not trying to use this new technology to "seize control of information that could be used in the classrooms," but the practical outcome, of course, will be precisely that. For despite its pitiful deference to the Mammon of market forces, New Labour is carefully nationalizing the one commodity the market cannot control: thought.

But the introduction of the National Grid for Learning marks more than the totalitarian reprogramming of the national machinery of education. This, the definitive system of teaching by numbers, also has the advantage of cutting out the middleman—the teacher. At least, it reduces him or her to the status of a mere classroom assistant, whose job is to wander round the room in which the children are latched on to their computers like so many piglets on the fat sow of the state, picking up and re-attaching those that drop off. This is a timely development. It will hardly surprise the reader to learn that secondary-teacher recruitment in England is on the very brink of collapse. Despite the government's recent (and offensively facile) advertising campaign—"Nobody forgets a good teacher!"—almost nobody wants to be one anymore. There are massive shortfalls in most major subjects, with so few candidates offering themselves to be trained to teach mathematics or science that the government has been forced to offer a £5,000 bonus to those that do.

And yet, incredibly, the government recently reduced the target figure for this year's recruitment of putative teachers, even though colleges failed wretchedly to meet the one that was set for 1998. The announcement of this cut (of 13 percent) was made under cover of the

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Christmas holiday, prompting those who spotted it to claim that the government was ashamed of having to make it. But a more cynical (and possibly more accurate) interpretation would be that the government is planning for a future without teachers—at least, without teachers in the traditional sense of the word. After all, the standard of those candidates who do come forward to be trained has been in free-fall for years. Trainee teachers now have the lowest grades at A level of any university students—an average of two D's and an E. (Those preparing for a career caring for animals, by contrast, hold an average of three A's.) To entrust the academic future—and, for that matter, present—of our children to such a declining body of dullards is clearly a non-starter.

You don't have to be dumb to become a teacher in Blair's Britain, of course, but you certainly have to be dumb to want to become one. Or blindly optimistic. The profession is about to be split into two lanes—fast and slow—so that the doctrine of performance-related pay can be accommodated. Some might be tempted to join the fast-track "officer class" that will emerge, better paid than the slow-track majority, who will be mere NCO's—national curriculum operatives. But even the stupidest of those on the brink of tertiary education must have noticed the relentless vilification of teaching by the "knowledge economists" who now politically control it. For years now, teachers have been publicly picked over and scrutinized with all the dispassionate delicacy of the Ayatollah Kalkhali paddling through the entrails of that poor American pilot. The claim that teachers are inadequate has proved to be the ultimate self-fulfilling prophecy, and, ultimately, its self-fulfilling prophet is Her Majesty's headline-grabbing chief inspector of schools, Chris Woodhead.

In 1995, at the end of a round of inspections by his Office for Standards in Education (known by its ugly acronym, "Ofsted"), Woodhead famously announced that he estimated there to be 15,000 incompetent teachers who ought to be sacked, and that "thousands more" were "on the borderline." The claim was a statistical *non sequitur*. School inspections then did not even attempt to assess individual teachers. But the figure was printed in large type on the front pages of all the newspapers, and it stuck in the public consciousness. Four years later, the man who believes in performance-related pay for teachers reported again. Now, he tells us, there are—yes, 15,000 incompetent teachers who ought to be sacked. So much for his own performance.

But such claims have brought about the virtual beatification of Woodhead in the eyes of the unthinking right, who rejoice that a figure of such authority should offer them an identifiable minority upon which to pour legitimized contempt. Papers like the *Daily Mail* (a journal whose appeal embraces the conservatively stupid and the stupidly conservative in equal measure) have rarely printed his name unqualified by the words "the admirable." For many, he is not just the embodiment of "standards"—a word that falls often from his lips—but the very standard itself, fluttering in the face of all those inadequate teachers. And last year, the government awarded him a second term in office with a headline-grabbing 40-percent pay increase. No wonder the *Observer* placed him 208th in its list of the 300 most influential people in Britain. Not many of the top 300, though, enjoy the apparently invincible security of tenure of Chris Woodhead. Proof of that occurred recently, when he survived a scandalous weekend in the papers which few others could have endured. The government is preparing legislation to criminalize sexual relationships between teachers and pupils aged 16-plus—hitherto an area covered by professional discipline. After a university lecture, Woodhead said that he believed that such relationships could sometimes be "educative" and "experiential." His words were widely reported—along with the fact that Woodhead, who had once been a teacher himself, had lived for nine years with one of his own ex-pupils after leaving his wife and new baby in 1975. But far from resigning, he simply apologized, recanted, and carried on—with the public support of the education minister himself.

The virtual apotheosis of Dr. Woodhead might be good news for him, and comforting in the lounge bars and golf clubs where his health is drunk, but it is bad news for teacher recruitment. His unassailable standing is quite particularly responsible for the refusal of intelligent young people to offer themselves as teachers, for the rush to early retirement by those in mid-service, and for the nauseated *ennui* of those who just can't get out. Yes, poor pay, long hours, wasteful bureaucracy, and the contempt of uncivilized children and adults alike play their part, but all of these are constantly fueled by the relentlessly self-righteous public utterances of a chief inspector whom it has suited two successive governments to endow with the status of a messiah. Nobody with any wit now seriously considers embarking upon a career which would have to be spent with that squat toad, Ofsted, on his back.

The delicious irony—for those who take pleasure in tastes of such bitterness—is that the demonic paradigm that Woodhead is pursuing is extinct. It is years since the witless ideals of the hubristic, Carnaby-Street-clutter-brained 1960's have polluted English education. Indeed, the last time that such creatures stalked the metal-casemented corridors of our box-like, brick-built state comprehensive schools was when—*mirabile dictu*—Christopher Woodhead was a teacher himself. And what sort of teacher? Precisely the sort that he now vilifies. For Woodhead's public crusade is in pursuit of the dragon of his own past—the definitive trendy. Considering that the man himself has claimed that anyone can walk into any school and size it up in an hour, at £150,000 a year, Ofsted is some indulgence—even for a messiah.

Ofsted inspections are stressful, invasive, and hideously expensive. More importantly, they are totally destructive of goodwill. The burden is upon the teacher to prove that he is doing his job to the satisfaction of the inspector; the presumption is that he is not. Teachers drown in paperwork, for they have to justify themselves by planning, recording, and analyzing their every action, as well as those of the pupils they teach. Why? Because nothing in teaching or learning is valued unless it is measurable and provable. While Britain's contemporary masters sing of the "professionalism" they expect of teachers, the notion that the teacher is in any real sense a professional—that is, one whom society trusts, by virtue of his qualification or experience, as entitled to profess his art—is dead. Respect is conditional upon the approval of a machinery controlled (with enthusiasm) by one man. It is nonsense. It is also a fraud.

Figures are now beginning to emerge which show that the "scientific" methodology of Ofsted is not just destructive, but laughably inaccurate. Twenty-five percent of schools inspected last year report-

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ed that grades were awarded for lessons that had not even taken place. (Precisely this happened to a colleague of mine recently, who received grading for four lessons, though only two had been observed.) Analysis by the *Times Educational Supplement*, the professional journal of teachers, claims that one in six schools classified by Ofsted as failing (a cataclysmic condemnation) should not have been. According to a previous chief inspector, Professor Eric Bolton, the role of the chief inspector is now "out of control," for he "can range where he will and justify his pronouncements by selecting as he pleases from the huge mass of inspection data that now exists."

After last term's week-long inspection of the inner-city school in which I have taught for the last five years, I know exactly what Professor Bolton means. Ofsted reports provide a statistical analysis of those lessons observed—but in our case, at least, the selection was neither random nor representative. Experienced teachers were visited a couple of times and left alone, but novices—and substitutes—were observed repeatedly. The language in which Ofsted's judgments are expressed, though, suggests scientific objectivity, and a credulous public accepts it. After all, you can't argue with science. Except that this is the science not of Galileo or Copernicus, but of the Inquisition which judged them.

My own experience of the inspection, though, was hardly of 17th-century Hispanic intensity. I did, mind you, have to suffer the indignity of being told by an inspector who was not an English graduate, and had not taught in the last decade, that my "knowledge of subject" was "good." It seemed discourteous to point out to him that this judgment had been reached some 21 years earlier, thank you, by one of our more ancient universities, which awarded me an honors degree in it. But when he went on to tell me that my teaching style should have been "more pedestrian," I could hold my tongue no longer. Had it been so, I countered, he would undoubtedly have told me that the lesson had not been lively enough. Warming to my theme, I questioned not just his judgment but the absurdity of the system that had sent him there to make it.

It was then he informed me that, at some stage during the literature lesson with my class of 18-year-olds, I had used the word "bloody." Under no circumstances should I have done so. I was taken aback. Had he ever, I wondered, come across the works of George Bernard Shaw? And then I remembered where I was. In the kingdom of Banausia, of course, there could be only one possible answer: "Not bloody likely."

Michael McMahon is a writer who has taught in both state and independent schools in England.

Letter From Bosnia

by Christian Hummel

The New Imperialism

◆

Martin is a Franciscan lay missionary whom I befriended early in my stay in Tuzla. Over beers at the Harley-Davidson, a bar popular with the international crowd, he explained, "A lot of organizations will be pulling out at the end of the year. This year is real important. If the democracy will hold, it has to right now" (a reference to the then-upcoming elections). "USAID is cutting back here. The business development program is already run by Bosnians, but the other projects [which included municipal infrastructure rebuilding and support of political parties] will be scaled back or shut down. You will see a mass exodus in December."

I had been in Bosnia a month, teaching English at a teen center in Tuzla, about 100 kilometers north of Sarajevo. I was in the country courtesy of the support given to me by my college, Dartmouth. Bosnia in many ways is similar to the New Hampshire I have grown to love, but the political and economic, not to mention security conditions, are vastly different from anything I have experienced in the United States. Before I went to Bosnia, people frequently asked me why I wanted to travel to a war zone. I explained to them that the war had been over for about three years and that there were several thousand well-armed American soldiers around the city in which I would be living. Bosnia is not presently a war zone. What I did not realize until I arrived, however, is that Bosnia is a colony.

In the late 20th century, the idea of imperialism has become unpopular, but that is not to say that imperialism does not exist. In the 19th century, the influential countries of the world were known as the "Great Powers"; in the Balkans today, they are called the "Contact Group." The Contact Group is composed of countries with an interest in the region, based either on history, such as Russia, or proximity, such as Germany. Perhaps the most significant difference between these two centuries is that the United States, a product of the imperialism of England, is a member of the "Contact Group."

One of the first things you notice when arriving at the airport in Sarajevo is the alphabet soup of trucks. UNHCR, OSCE, CARE, USAID, JOC, and the rest cry out like mantras to some unseen god of refugee relief. Similarly, the hodgepodge of military uniforms is intriguing. Italian, German, American, Hungarian, and a few other nationalities can all be seen in the three-hour drive from the capital to Tuzla, and that is just one region in the country. It does not include the British "sector" in Banja Luka, in the western portion of the country, nor the other contingents based in the American "sector" of Tuzla. Present-day Bosnia resembles post-World War II Berlin, without the single wall dividing the city. In Bosnia, the lines are not so straight and defined.

Aid organizations are abundant, installing Internet access, checking satellite dishes at refugee camps, or spreading the Baptist faith, as if what this country needs is the Starr Report online, *Baywatch* episodes, and Protestantism. Of course, most, if not all, of the men and women I talked to genuinely believed in what they were doing. Few of them, however, spoke about the big picture while discussing their work.

One hundred years ago, imperialism meant occupying soldiers and colonial administrators; it still does. The question of U.S. troops stationed in Bosnia elicits mixed responses. Younger people, teenagers in particular, see the troops as a blessing. "When the Americans came, the war stopped. I like it that they are here," I heard throughout my stay. Some of the older people have a different opinion.

In 1995, when it became evident that American forces would be deployed to Bosnia, many small-business owners invested what little money they had in stores or restaurants in anticipation of the

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rich soldiers who would be coming. Once the soldiers arrived, they were horrified to discover that the Americans were not allowed off the base except for official duties. Near one of the many American bases scattered throughout the Tuzla valley, a beautiful new building contains a restaurant named "Kalifornia Pizza," or something along those lines. The building is remarkable for its glitter and for the fact that the restaurant does not have a single patron. The owners clearly had hoped to cash in on the American troops, who have no choice but to dine in the Burger King and Baskin-Robbins facilities which the Army has installed on each of its bases.

Walking through the streets, it is easy to spot the American soldiers. When off the base, they are required to wear full battle gear, including a flak jacket, kevlar helmet, and an M16. All movement requires at least a three-truck convoy. Each Humvee has a crew-fed machine gun, which is manned. Some of the soldiers I talked to agreed that these measures, while intended to ward off trouble, may in fact invite it. But should someone take a shot at them, the soldiers are ready.

"I can clear this square in 30 seconds if I have to," bragged one SAW machine-gun operator while we chatted near the large marketplace in the center of town.

Like soldiers of all ages, they miss home and do not particularly like being stationed in Bosnia. All are tired of garrison life.

The new imperialism is driven by money as much as by military force. By threatening to withhold funds, or the outright buying of support, the West has established a government which is on the verge of collapse. The recent elections were managed by OSCE, which is affectionately known as the "Organization for Stupidity and Chaos in Europe." Posters advertising the various political parties could be seen throughout the city with "USAID" or "OSCE" stamped in the corner. The West did not pretend to want anything less than having its hand-picked candidates win. In some parts of the country, the people do not even have the illusion of self-government. United Nations' or OSCE diplomats manage these places directly, such as the town of Brcko, north of Tuzla.

Recent history has shown that the United States has anything but a Midas touch when it comes to maintaining governments in foreign countries. The fall of the Shah of Iran, of Marcos in the Philippines, and the entire history of what was South Vietnam should give the present leadership in Sarajevo pause. With last September's elections bringing victory to many leaders not associated with the West, it would appear that the people are rejecting what OSCE, the United Nations, and the United States have to offer. The division of Bosnia into two "entities" does not answer the question of how to get the various groups to live together. There is no incentive to resolve any disputes peacefully.

The teenagers with whom I worked all said the same thing: "We've seen war, and we want peace." But they could not deny the fact that tensions between the groups still exist. One older Serbian boy spoke to me about younger children, Muslims, who called him names behind his back. During our conversation, he nearly burst into tears; the frustration of the situation was almost too much for him to bear. He is 16 years old.

The tension is evident in other ways. Behind the center at which I worked was a large Serbian Orthodox church. The structure showed little, if any, signs of damage, while the library next door still had the distinctive marks from the shell fragments which had hit it. However, on a small wall surrounding the church were the words, "Keep on Rotting."

Christian Hummel, an ancient history and religion double major at Dartmouth College, is an editor of the Dartmouth Review.

Letter From Lagado

by John N. Frary

The 21st-Century Doctorate

◆

On April 1, the Litcritological Subcommittee of the multiracial, multicultural, multidisciplinary Re/Visioning Committee for a 21st-Century Doctorate presented the English Department with a plan that will make Lagado University the first in the United States with a doctoral program fully adapted to the needs of the 21st-century American graduate student.

The plan integrates our copyrighted fail-safe grading system (which has been safeguarding graduate students against any possibility of course failure since 1984) with a totally reconceptualized set of terminal examinations and dissertation parameters for the new "Ph.D.lite."

The subcommittee's model for a revised written examination emphasizes multiple-choice and true/false "items" (grad students react negatively to the word "question"). Graduate students who have completed all of their course requirements will be invited to respond to at least 200 items correctly. There are to be no penalties for incorrect responses, but there must be *at least* 200 correct replies for a student to pass. The test is to incorporate 1,500 items altogether, all of them based on readings from the *Glibb Notes for Graduate Students* series, including 175 which register a perfect 1.000 on the Clinton/Kendall Ambiguity Index (i.e., true/false "questions" which are both true *and* false, and multiple-choice "questions" with four correct, and no incorrect, answers). This arrangement allows a selection adapted to the cultural background, abilities, and academic preparation of any possible doctoral candidate.

At the plenary session held to discuss the proposed written test, George S. Stodgett, the department's senior professor, objected to the provision of Albanian, Spanish, and Creole versions on the grounds that the purpose of the test is to assess competence for a degree in English. A motion from Prof. Ikuna Gheg (translated by her graduate assistant, Jason Hasangjakai) to censure Professor Stodgett for demonization, insensitivity, monoculturalism, xenophobia, and anglolingual chauvinism passed 49 to one.

The Ph.D.l Oral and Activities Examination considered at the second plenary session incorporates a predetermined list of multiculturally accessible items designed to ensure interrogatory equity and uniformity for all. In addition, Ph.D.l candidates will be able to select their examination committee. Representatives from the Omnium Gatherum of People Unwhite; Brethren Outed and Otherized; Sistern Soured on Society; Students Against War, Fascism, and Homelessness; the Lagado University Native American (Truly Indigenous) Coalition; the Front for Apodal/Unipodal Voiceless Victims of Verbal Violence; the Pan-Indigene Survivors Society for Educational Diversity; the Outraged Feminists Front;

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the Albino Rage Commando; and the Callisteatopygian Coalition will be present at all oral examinations to monitor the tones of voice, facial expressions, and body language of the examiners for any signs of racism, sexism, classism, heteronormativism, homoabilitarianism, and lookism. A sign-language option will be available for the differently abled.

Once again, Professor Stodgett strained his colleagues' patience with a lot of pre-postmodernist carping and quibbling, going on and on with an interminable list of objections to these test items:

#1. Demonstrate ability to sing the *Internationale*—words and music—all the way through.
#2. Demonstrate the ability effectively to employ ten "ism" nouns, six "ize" verbs, and six variant uses of "with regard to/in respect to" during five minutes of oral presentation.
#3. Demonstrate the ability to read silently without lip movements.
#4. Demonstrate the ability to place the page one is reading so that there will be no shadows upon it.
#5. Demonstrate the ability to verblobbize two plain expository passages of Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* into nauseating unintelligibility.
#6. Demonstrate the ability to opheliate (i.e., transgenderize) comprehensively one soliloquy from *Hamlet*.
#7. Demonstrate the ability to devise 16 different interpretations of an instructional leaflet for operating a tea kettle.
#8. Demonstrate the inability to understand what any given author is trying to say.
#9. Demonstrate an ability to empathize for five contiguous minutes with the grievances of members of a culturally marginalized group (to be chosen by sortition).
#10. Demonstrate the ability (when applicable) to apologize effectively for being a white male heterosexual.

As he concluded enumerating his objections to number ten, Stodgett's colleagues decided that enough was sufficient and voted 49 to one to expel him from the meeting for demonstrating an inability to communicate effectively with his peers. The remaining members voted unanimously to approve all items on the list without further discussion.

The crown and crux of the subcommittee's work are found in the provisions for ensuring that all students enrolled in the LU/English graduate program will successfully terminate. First, the subcommittee has drawn up a list of 75 easily inflatable and utterly untestable hypotheses upon which its Ph.D.l candidates can base their dissertations. Second, Ph.D.l. candidates who have completed their examinations will have 25 years to complete their dissertations with an extension of 25 years available for all students over 40 years of age. Third, a course on Prof. Gustave Grenouille-Chanson's non-hierarchical, multiplural, plurivalent "Cognitive-Discursive/Random Obnubilation Media" will replace ENG 0.97 ("Pre-Postmodern Remediation for Graduate Students"), ENG 0.98 ("Postmodern English as a Second Language"), and LIT 99.0 ("Litcritalian for Litcriticians").

Grenouille-Chanson's CD-ROM works by activating a series of "random integration from the paradigmacopia of nonceptual interpretive terminologies" macro strings. This automatically produces a critico-dialogical carnevalesque which plays out a fluid, freeform, unending theoretical *jouissance*.

A simple click of the RIPNIT icon on the grad student's computer screen initiates a search and retrieval operation which links a series of cryptic neologisms, energetic and arbitrary verbs, opaque ismatisms, baffling alitalities, impenetrable izationates, commanding adverbs, and turbocharged adjectives randomly chosen from a comprehensive database of both structuralist and post-structuralist works. These discursive components are automatically sorted into protracted sentences complete with subjects, verbs, objects, and plenty of endlessly elongated subordinate clauses, insanely abstruse insubordinate clauses, and bewildering parenthetical *obiter dicta*. The sentences are then sorted into paragraphs arranged (according to the user's metrical predilections) in one of three simple rhythmic structures: antispastic, fourth epitrite, or dispondee. The paragraphs are then garnished with appropriate footnotes and quotes from leading continental theorists.

A brief sample of the Cognitive-Discursive/Random Obnubilation Media composition, ripnitted from the works of Jacques Derrida, Jacques Lacan, Gilles Deleuze, and Félix Guattari, illustrates the efficacy of its operation:

An *objet petit* **a** is analogous to a rapidly moving rhizome; that is, a

THE LU/ENGLISH NEWSLETTER

Although Lagado University in Kafka, South Dakota cannot claim the fame of a Yale, Stanford or Berkeley; its English Department does claim to stay abreast of every slash, gash and laceration of the Postmodernist cutting edge. Our motto says it all: "If it's bleeding in New Haven, then it's hemorrhaging in Kafka, South Dakota." Subscribers to the departmental newsletter will find it an unfailingly reliable entrée to the outré. Our faculty stand ever-alert to decant whole hogsheads of inchoate verblobbage over such pustules of coherent thought as may erupt anywhere in the American academy. Subscribe now for your libretto to the Kanondämmerung.

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two-sided entity, yielding a key or grid equally present in the signifying and the signified series. It maneuvers nomadically through the text, at once word and thing, name and object, sense and denotatus, expression and designation, exploring the semantic, phonetic, and morphological connections silently, laboriously, obsessionally, compulsively; and with the stealth of a thief in the night it swells up with everything it had previously swallowed but is pregnant only with itself. It guarantees, therefore, the convergence of the two series which it traverses, an abject object, an occupant without a place, always supernumerary and displaced. Thus we disclose a text containing no unit of occurrence, fixed form, identifiable theme, or imaginary determinable as such. It contains no themes, but only anthems, scattered throughout and collecting everywhere.

The department is convinced that Grenouille-Chanson's program will enable every single individual in the North American population—regardless of race, sexual preference, gender, and location on the lower western slope of the Bell Curve—to output litcritological dissertations in printer's ream lots.

Prof. Harry Glibb, the subcommittee chairmammal, presented a chart which showed the department reaching an annual production of 65.3 Ph.D.lites by 2004 and then rising steadily to a peak of 1,311.5 by the year 2025. A second chart showed how the 35-year trend in "grade inflation" is being replicated by the galloping growth of "degree inflation," aided and abetted by large numbers of taxpayers determined to paper their young with academic credentials of every kind. This phenomenon will ensure increasing employment opportunities for the swelling flood of Ph.D.l's flowing from America's graduate schools.

A third chart, based on the assumption that all institutions of higher education in the country will, sooner or later, institute Ph.D.l degree programs of their own in every discipline, showed that by 2025 every single adult on the North American continent with an IQ and/or pulse rate registering at 33 and above will have a Ph.D.l in some discipline or another.

Harry's fourth chart showed that the existing English faculty will all be retired well before the saturation point is reached.

The faculty congratulated the Re/Visioning Committee for a job well done. They congratulated Harry Glibb for his inspiring presentation. They congratulated Chairmammal Fish for initiating the process. They congratulated themselves for not being complicitous in hegemonic arrangements of power.

Lagado University's president, W. Wittering Bleatley, congratulated the English Department, predicting that Lagado University was destined to be the international pacesetter and pathfinder in the quest for equal educational access and egress for all. The president lyrically limned a visionary picture of an America populated with Doctors of Philosophy (lite). We quote from his peroration:

> Our species will, at last, begin to harmonize itself in earnest. . . . The Featherless Biped will be empowered to master first the semiconscious and then also the unconscious processes of hir own organism—breathing, the circulation of the blood, digestion, reproduction—and, within the necessary limits, will subordinate them to the common good. Even purely physiological life will become collectively experimental. The human species, the sluggish *Homo sapiens*, will once again enter the state of radical reconstruction and will become in its own hands the object of the most complex methods of multicultural-psychophysical training. . . . Passing out of graduate school, the Featherless Biped will make it hir goal to exalt hir own emotions, to elevate hir instincts to the heights of consciousness, to make them transparent . . . to create a higher sociobiological type, a supermammal if you will. . . . Equipped with advanced degrees, the Featherless Biped will become incomparably stronger, wiser, subtler. Hir body will become more harmonious, hir movements more rhythmic, hir voice more melodious. The ordinary forms of mammalhood will rise to the heights of Ph.D.'s, J.D.'s, LL.D.'s. And beyond this ridge, other peaks will emerge: PostPh.D.'s, SuperJ.D.'s, Über-LL.D.'s. The possibilities are glorious, the promise of expansion endless.

President Bleatley also predicted that his children would live to see the campus of Lagado University stretching from the Wyoming border to the Missouri River.

John N. Frary is a professor of history at Middlesex County College in Edison, New Jersey.

Letter From Florence

by Andrei Navrozov

The Chic and the Psychic

◆

I already sounded the alarm in last month's letter. This really is an impossible city to get out of. And so, having bid my farewells, I'm still here, despite the fact that the rent has been paid in advance on a perfectly adequate little aerie over the Grand Canal in Venice. The place even has a spacious terrace, overlooking the charred remains of the Fenice, where, once I grow tired of looking at those perennially idle, cheerfully chrome-yellow construction cranes paid for by the friends of opera everywhere, my future correspondence will originate. If ever I get myself onto this spacious terrace of mine, that is.

The hereditary proprietor of the Venetian palazzo, Baron F-, turned out to be a cousin of a friend of mine from Cambridge, which was discovered quite by chance while the estate agent was showing me around the vacant apartment. So we immediately sat down to some suitably amazing crystalline white from the Veneto, and by and by the conversation turned to Florence and her ways. When I told him where I was staying, an ominous shadow crossed his brow. "You will not be here before spring, my friend," he said. "I can take your money now if you like, but you will not be here in time for the carnival. I know Florence, and I know these people. They will not let you go when you want to leave. They want

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to decide everything."

I murmured something by way of polite disbelief. What exactly was he talking about? Voodoo? Brainwashing? Hypnotic influence? "More like telepathy," he replied, unsmiling. "You'll see. When the crunch comes, you'll find out that they can read your mind." Gradually the subject petered out, and by the time we sat down to lunch at the smallest and coziest of the five small cozy tables at Ernesto Ballarin's "Da Arturo," where my compatriot Nureyev had left a lasting cultural imprint by teaching the owner to fry potatoes and mushrooms together in the Russian manner, the conversation was about food, tax evasion, and the Venetian way of doing things.

This Venetian way of doing things I like very much, by the way, because basically it involves not doing them. Every man here is a careful dresser, a dapper and exceedingly complex arrangement of tasteful checks, stripes, and dots that cannot but make the onlooker whistle, thinking something like boy oh boy, if this fellow has so much energy to spare before he leaves the house in the morning, think of how much he has left over for the rest of the day! In fact, this is almost entirely deceptive, because all of the fellow's energy, all his life force as it were, has in fact gone into achieving that sartorially perfect equilibrium between corporeality and imagination, and what little is left is the strength to raise an *ombra* to the mouth without spilling some *grappa* on the tablecloth in a feeble and indecorous gesture. I know I'm going to do well in Venice. Being gloriously one-eyed in a land of the blind is my idea of belonging. And if they denounce me for being a grasping overachiever, so be it.

The other day, in a book about Voltaire, I found some references to a Venetian named Algarotti who came to stay at Cirey, the Champagne estate where the great controversialist spent half his life shacking up with Mme. du Châtelet. Carlyle once described him as "not supremely beautiful, though much the gentleman in manners as in ruffles and ingeniously logical; rather yellow in mind as in skin and with a taint of obsolete Venetian macassar," which, after a day spent in male company in Venice, sounded just about right to me. Still, I was curious about Signor Algarotti's contribution to the world of ideas, which must have served as his passkey to Cirey. It turned out that this was a book entitled *Newtonianismo per le dame*, "a simplification of Newton's theories intended for Italian women."

Anyway, when I got back to Florence that evening, I had every intention of telling Princess C- that, wonderful as life had been in her famous city, in her historic house, and under her illustrious family's protection, I could no longer afford to pay what it cost. And what it cost, incidentally, I no longer have any fear of revealing, for the simple reason that whenever a pretentious foreigner rents something fancy in Italy, it always costs the same number of millions. I need not convert this number into dollars, or explain what it includes, or even mention whether it is due weekly, monthly, or annually. The figure, predictable as a Henry James formula for romantic disillusionment, is a symbolic compact which represents the New World tenant's naiveté on the one hand and, on the other, the Old World landlord's legitimate desire to protect ancient relics from being overrun by hordes of visitors who are no less tightfisted for being so very naive. Hence, whether you rent a seaside villa in a fashionable resort, or the most architecturally important house in a provincial town, or a floor of a notable palazzo in a large city, the price will always be the same, and you will always have to pay it in cash.

The landlady was waiting up for me. If I were telling the story of a poor student lodging in a cheap boarding house, this would be the way to crank up the melodrama, but since mine is more the story of a rake's progress, I will say instead that the Princess asked me to tea. "I *think* you are thinking of moving," she said, doing absolutely nothing to obscure the emphasis of the remark, which fell rather more heavily on her own thinking than on mine. I gulped some tea, recalling Baron F-'s warning about psychic Florentines of just a few hours earlier. "I know we've agreed on a certain figure, which you've been paying," she went on, knowing only too well that I was already three weeks late with the month's rent, "but now that I realize you're thinking of leaving Florence, how would it strike you if I told you that I only wanted half?"

Spooky, that's how, is what I remember actually thinking, though at this juncture the Princess chose not to read my mind, and anyway the thought did not linger. "After all, when we first met I did not know you." Convincing, perfectly convincing, I suddenly said to myself, as if waking from some ugly confrontational dream and now beginning to imagine all the good uses to which I could put the rubber-banded wad, called "cutlet" in New Russian parlance, when next one found its way into my pocket. These Florentines are nothing if not perfectly convincing. The Princess does have a charming smile. Now that she knows me 50 percent better than before, the rent is halved. Convincing! And the tea is quite good, incidentally. Assam?

"Ceylon. So that's settled, then," she summed up brightly. "You're staying."

It remains for me to add that during the two months that followed our conversation certain changes came into the tenant's life at the Palazzo C-. The wood for the fireplaces was not as dry and no longer brought up with the same enthusiasm as before. The other chambermaid, not wonderfully obedient Lucia, came more often and inaugurated the noxious practice of presenting household bills for such trifling items as candles and cayenne pepper. The choir practice in the other wing became less tuneful, and seemed louder and more intrusive. Finally and most significantly, I was being charged for heating, electricity, gas, and the rest of life's prose, with the result that now, after the sums have been done, I can only wince and tell myself the terrible truth, which is that as a matter of practical reality my rent never changed. The same symbolic number of millions as always was actually withdrawn from my pocket, this time by means of an accounting procedure that I can only describe as telekinetic.

But as Baron F- had foretold, the important thing as far as Princess C- was concerned was that she got us to change our plans. ("Plans?! What plans can a lazy Venetian make with a drunk Muscovite?! *Per piacere, sii serio*!" is what I would probably hear if I could read her mind.) I am now leaving Florence not on my schedule, and less on his, but on the whim of a descendant of those shrewd merchant bankers who dealt in the absurd gullibility of mankind for so long that the manipulative cynicism in their blood can pass, in the sleepy, sleepier eyes of the rest of us frivolous and indolent Venetians, for a bit of spooky hypnosis.

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FILM

Under, Over, and Worlds Apart

by George McCartney

Eight Millimeter

Produced by Columbia Pictures
and Hofflund/Polone
Directed by Joel Schumacher
Screenplay by Andrew Kevin Walker
Released by Columbia Pictures

October Sky

Produced by Charles Gordon
and Larry Franco
Directed by Joe Johnston
Screenplay by Lewis Colick
and Homer Hickam
Released by Universal Pictures

Analyze This

Produced by Tribeca Productions
Directed by Harold Ramis
Screenplay by Ken Lonergan
and Peter Tolan
Released by Warner Bros.

Watching film today exercises your capacity for hope. You're always longing for the medium to realize its potential, knowing in advance it won't more times than it will. Three movies I saw recently prove the point: two disappointments, underworld in every sense, and one spirited reach for the sky.

Let's get the worst out of the way first.

Although St. Paul claimed the wages of sin were death, many of Hollywood's finest would beg to differ. For them, the wages of sin are, well, wages. And extravagantly bountiful wages at that.

Case in point: Joel Schumacher, the currently popular director who saw fit to sexualize a comic-book hero by redesigning Batman's bodysuit with nipples and a codpiece. Schumacher apparently has an aggravated talent for prurience, and it's once again on display in *Eight Millimeter*.

There's only one reason to comment on this loathsome film. It perfectly illustrates Hollywood's tried-and-true version of bait and switch. Schumacher dresses up a degrading panorama of pornography and sadism as though it were a morally serious exploration of evil.

The film's dishonesty is apparent from the very first scenes. A wealthy woman discovers something disturbing in the safe of her recently deceased husband. It seems to be a snuff film—pornography featuring the murder of a woman. Does the dowager burn the film? Of course not. She enlists private detective Tom Welles (Nicholas Cage) to determine its authenticity. Plausible, right?

Soon we're glimpsing what Welles sees when he screens the grisly reel. A helpless-looking girl in a camisole sits on a bed as a burly man wearing leather and an S&M mask enters the frame. This alone is quite enough for our hero. Well before anything else happens, he's recoiling in horror at the possibility that this may be the prelude to an authentic snuff film. Would you want a detective this squeamish? Of course not. Schumacher does, however. He wants to establish his film's veneer of moral righteousness early and often. This, we're to understand, is unspeakable stuff; it's only being shown because the plot demands it.

With this license, Schumacher pursues his real objective: to send Welles—and us—on a tour of the porn world. As Welles scours the marketplace looking for evidence that will help him uncover the girl's fate, he must watch numerous videos of erotic sadism, and so must we if we insist on seeing this stinker out.

It's not surprising that a major studio would support a project of this kind. Mainstream films today are so steeped in pornography that a director really has to shred the envelope to shock an audience. One does what one can to earn one's wages.

Stripped of its veil of seriousness, *Eight Millimeter* is little different than the pornography it pretends to condemn. And like standard-issue pornography, it shows small regard for narrative plausibility and even less for moral distinctions.

There is, however, one exception to its cynical commercialism. The connoisseur of erotic slaughter, we discover, is surnamed Christian. The ill-fated runaway who supplies his high-priced thrill travels with a rosary in her suitcase. A porno director keeps a seven-foot crucifix in his studio for crossbow practice. The S&M killer is shown helping his aged mother onto a private bus emblazoned with the words "Faithful Christian Fellowship." And just in case we missed the point, the camera lingers on a statue of the Blessed Virgin standing outside the miscreant's back door.

Get it? These vile, depraved people—saints preserve us!—they're all Christians! Now who would have thought it? Well, this will teach us Bible-thumping hypocrites to shut up and take what's coming to us.

Fortunately, films like *October Sky* come along just frequently enough to rinse away the foul aftertaste left by the likes of *Eight Millimeter*.

I saw *October Sky* with my nine-year-old son, Liam, who was enchanted by the movie despite its conspicuous lack of special effects. When I told him that it was based on *Rocket Boys*, retired NASA engineer Homer Hickam's memoir about growing up in a 1950's coal-mining town, Liam insisted we get the book. He's reading it as I write this. There may be higher accolades to pay a film, but I can't think of any.

Director Joe Johnston deserves congratulations for daring to take on this unlikely project. By today's standards, it's as far from mainstream as you can get. It even includes a scene in which a couple of 17-year-olds find themselves alone in a car at night and—get this—keep their clothes on. Though strongly attracted to one another, they're too shy and respectful to act on their inclinations. Rather than mock their reserve, Johnston celebrates its sweetness. One can only imagine what Joel Schumacher might have made of this episode.

The film opens with a ruminative evocation of Hickam's hometown of Coalwood, West Virginia. In an eerily quiet montage punctuated by brief blackouts, we watch coal miners come and go on their daily rounds, stooped, exhausted,

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begrimed, yet shrouded in an aura of working-class dignity. Then the screen fills with what seems to be the folds of an iron-gray curtain. Only when these folds begin to move and the camera pulls back do we realize that it's a huge reel of steel cable hauling the mine elevator up from the depths, bringing one crew of miners to the surface before lowering the next into the pit.

The sequence tells us much about these men. Their lives are curtained by stygian work shifts. To make their living, they must toil long hours in darkness, crawling through narrow tunnels, breathing coal dust, and watching warily for cave-ins. Their reward comes in the brief respites they enjoy with their families. It's not surprising that Homer Hickam didn't want to follow his father into mining work.

The arrival of Sputnik in 1957 shows Homer (Jake Gyllenhaal) the way out. While his neighbors scan the evening sky for the Russian triumph, wondering whether it might drop bombs on them, Homer is inspired. He'll build rockets. By doing so, he hopes to construct his escape route to college and then a career in aerospace, far away from Coalwood.

After numerous misadventures, including errant rockets that narrowly miss his neighbors' homes, Homer and his friends begin to succeed. Soon, the rest of the town becomes involved, coming to see the midget missiles launched.

As the boys passionately pursue their rocket experiments, the film's scenes alternate between oppressive mine interiors and expansive skyscapes, visually conveying the story's central struggle between a loving but dour father and his ambitious, visionary son. Homer Hickam, Sr. (Chris Cooper) wants his boy to stop dreaming and prepare himself for a life of work in the mine. But Junior won't listen. He's literally shooting for the stars.

To his credit, Joe Johnston neither exaggerates nor romanticizes Hickam's story. He depicts mining as a harsh occupation, but one that offers men opportunities to prove their ingenuity and valor. Hickam may bridle at what he takes to be his father's blinkered existence, but he respects his father and longs for his approval.

It's a true story and an old one, captured with photography that's all the more compelling for its seemingly unstaged compositions and natural lighting. This film shows us what the medium can do in the right hands.

Analyze This, produced by Billy Crystal, who plays one of the leads, and directed by Harold Ramis, promised to be funny. Like *October Sky*, it begins with a reference to Sputnik. Here, the upstart satellite provides ironic counterpoint to the infamous Apalachin, New York, Mafia summit that took place in 1957. It's meant to establish that the story's Mafia boys are earthbound clods. At least, I think that's the point, but who can tell with a film so sloppily written?

I found this putative comedy as witless as they come. Try this on for size. Robert DeNiro, as a John Gotti-like thug, notices a 70-year-old man gawking at him. Exasperated by the geezer, he snarls, "Whaddya lookin' at? Get outa here before I break your [supply the all-purpose participial modifier] face." If this is your idea of a laugh line, you'll certainly enjoy the rest of the show. If not, this is one movie offer you can safely refuse.

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EDUCATION

Yes, California, There Is a Right Answer

by Marian Kester Coombs

They say you can't fight city hall—but a group of California parents calling itself Mathematically Correct (MC) has taken on the statehouse and won the right to restore a rigorous math curriculum to public education.

It is only just that the tide should begin turning in the former Golden State, which, because it boasts the biggest market for textbooks, has imparted to the rest of the states so many ghastly fads, from Whole Language to anti-American "history" to science-as-radical-environmentalism.

The "Whole Math" fad against which Mathematically Correct campaigned successfully is based on: a verbalizing and visualizing approach rather than an abstract, numerical one; a reliance upon concrete "manipulatives" (marbles, straws, etc.) in lieu of abstract number concepts; a demotion of the classroom teacher from leader to "co-discoverer" who "facilitates" rather than instructs; an emphasis on teamwork rather than measurable individual achievement; the use of calculators even in the lower grades for routine computation; a fixation on everyday, "real world" applications for math (balancing your checkbook, buying groceries, selling lemonade); and much, much talk about "process" and "method" and "critical," "higher-order thinking" as opposed to memorization of facts and the specific content of the various domains of mathematics.

Whole Math represents a deep confusion of mathematics with arithmetic. It is a remedial math program for the innumerate masquerading as a reformed curriculum that will include those previously left out of the discipline.

The idea of "math without numbers" sounded dazzlingly innovative to many cutting-edge educators, but in attempting to convey any sort of mathematical proficiency to students, the miraculous new method broke down. Parents watched in horror as their children whipped out calculators to determine ten percent of 450. "Rainforest algebra" texts droned on multiculturally for 100 pages or so before getting around to presenting a single equation. Parents heard from their children how "fun and easy" math was now that they didn't have to memorize those pesky multiplication tables or get marked down for not getting the "so-called" right answer.

In California, and everywhere else Whole Math was introduced, state test scores nose-dived. One-half to two-thirds of freshmen admitted to the Cal State university system were found to need at least one year of remedial math, despite being drawn from the top third of graduating seniors.

Among the more horrified parents were those who founded MC, "dedicated to the proposition that 2+2=4." Cofounder Martha Schwartz, a college geology professor, vividly recalls the night she and her husband "discovered we were not alone" in their reaction to the new New Math.

It was October 1995. Martha was despondent over "the damage done to good kids and the suffering of the best teachers" as Whole Math was forced through

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by the usual crowd of activist ideologues at her college. Her husband Rick, a high-school chemistry teacher who had already clashed with his department over the attempted introduction of a "whole" science curriculum, had been invited to accept an award at an American Chemical Society meeting in San Diego. One of the speakers, molecular biologist Michael McKeown of the Salk Institute, closed his remarks with a critique of Whole Math. "After a minute or so of this, Rick and I were almost jumping up and down in our chairs. Within a week or so the three of us had formed Mathematically Correct."

The molecular process of resistance had just begun. Relying on e-mail and the Internet, the fledgling pressure group contacted everyone it had heard of who dissented from the new order in math education. All the individuals contacted had hitherto believed their various school districts' solemn protestations that they "were the only ones who had a problem with the new math reforms."

Paul Clopton of UC San Diego, instrumental in setting up MC's "2+2=4" website (*www.mathematicallycorrect.com*), notes that, "when parents get together, the bureaucrats' first line of defense fades away. As each new parent told their story, we were constantly re-energized." Martha Schwartz says simply, "Every time I talk to another child who has been cheated, I wish I could do more."

At first, MC's efforts focused on convincing local districts—Petaluma, Novato, Escondido, San Diego, Torrance, and others—to get rid of existing Whole Math programs. Design engineer Larry Gipson, another cofounder of MC, led a successful fight in Escondido because "I didn't want my kids experimented on.... They were telling the kids to invent their own math out of thin air." Mr. Gipson formed Parents for Math Choice and lobbied his school board for just that: choice between traditional and whole approaches. Today, 70 percent of district parents opt for traditional, and parental permission is required before any experimental program is implemented.

After some other successes at the local level, MC decided to aim for the overhaul of the state math framework. Revised every seven years, this framework dictates the content and methodology of prospective textbooks. The group pushed for tough new K-12 content standards and for MC to be represented on the appointed Academic Standards Commission that would write them.

Larry Gipson had learned that victory was "more about beating the district politically than arguing them to death." Toward this end, MC developed working relationships with two Republican assemblymen, Steve Baldwin and Howard Kaloogian. Group members peppered legislators with data regarding Whole Math's dismal showing on all kinds of tests, wrote open letters and critiques, and were frequently on hand to testify. Assemblyman Baldwin reports that, "when Mathematically Correct submitted testimony in person or in writing, everyone took notice," and Assemblyman Kaloogian adds that "being right gave them a great deal of leverage in trying to change the curriculum."

And change it they have. The math standards finally adopted by the state of California last year are a realization of Mathematically Correct's belief that, in Michael McKeown's words, "Mastery of the basics is the key prerequisite for effective problem-solving, and one of the most effective ways to build understanding." Williamson Evers, who played an important role in writing the new standards, explains that "we put them in plain English.... We took out the fuzzy math. We beefed them up. And we unscrambled the courses so Algebra I, Geometry and Algebra II exist again."

The new standards have been denounced by California's superintendent of public instruction, Delaine Eastin, who has taken it upon herself to instruct teachers to ignore them. But new Governor Gray Davis seems disinclined to backtrack on the standards, a sign that the public-relations battle may be won—at least for the moment. Meanwhile, an independent review by the Fordham Foundation of state math standards recently rated California's number one and even compared them favorably to Japan's. Distinguished mathematician Ralph Raimi, coauthor of the Fordham review, says of MC, "They are not parochial. In working on California details they're also lighting a path for others.... And unlike their opponents, they listen to mathematicians, whereas those who excoriate them are invariably from the math education, not the mathematical, community."

These opponents truly believe, as one of their number declared, that "it no longer makes sense to teach children standard algorithms." And they are quite willing to portray MC and its allies as hooded agents of the Christian right trying to drag children back into the Dark Ages of rote memorization, "drill and kill," and the Right Answer.

In fact, most MC members are politically liberal (this is California, after all), even if academically traditional. Martha Schwartz, during her fight to restore algebra to the Torrance schools, was most annoyed by

> having to write a letter pointing out that as a secular Jewish geology teacher and registered Democrat, I was not, as charged, a Christian fundamentalist conservative—but noting that those were all legal things to be.... People would actually say things like "All you college people care about is skills and knowledge."

Paul Clopton echoes her:

> One of the most upsetting things was a statement by a Palo Alto teacher in connection with the struggle there. To paraphrase, the teacher said, "Those parents are only concerned because they want their own children to be competitive in college." Were we supposed to feel shameful?

Mrs. Schwartz adds that she is "always outraged when people claim females and minorities can't learn math or science like 'regular people.'" Lest that sound like a distortion of her opponents' real views, listen to Jack Price, then head of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, in a debate with Michael McKeown on San Diego radio in April 1996: "What we have now is nostalgia math. It's the mathematics that we've always had, that is good for the most part for high-socioeconomic-status Anglo males." Later in the debate, Price asserts:

> We have a great deal of research that has been done showing that women, for example, and minority groups do not learn the same way. They have the capability of learning, but . . . the teaching strategies that we use with them are different from those that we have been able to use in the past when . . . most of those who did graduate and go on to college were the Anglo males.

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"Now Jack," asks the interviewer, "in what way would a woman or a minority learn [math] differently than I learned it?"

Jack: "All of the research that has been done with gender differences or ethnic differences has been—males, for example, learn better deductively in a competitive environment. . . . [W]omen have a tendency to learn better in a collaborative effort when they are doing inductive reasoning."

Interviewer: "What does that mean, inductive reasoning?"

Jack: "Well, they are able to generalize from a number of different kinds of—I can't think of the word I want, but, from a number of specific instances they can make a generalization."

Mr. Price never explained how it is possible to teach math to people who cannot learn mathematically, nor why a traditional pedagogy that teaches math mathematically to those capable of learning math should be scrapped in favor of one that insults and handicaps the best potential learners. And, of course, he never addressed the most bizarre aspect of the whole situation: why a high-socioeconomic-status Anglo male like himself should be pimping for a sorry lot of feel-good nonsense like Whole Math whose entire premise is that the Anglo male's day is done, and good riddance.

They say that as California goes, so goes the nation. If true, Mathematically Correct's victory is a major blow against the conversion of mathematics into "math appreciation" in our nation's schools.

Marian Kester Coombs writes from Crofton, Maryland.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Our Little War in Kosovo

by Doug Bandow

After ethnic Albanian guerrillas initially rejected the peace settlement fashioned by U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, a friend of hers told *Newsweek* that "She's angry at everyone—the Serbs, the Albanians and NATO." Another Clinton administration official raged: "Here is the greatest nation on earth pleading with some nothingballs to do something entirely in their own interest—which is to say yes to an interim agreement—and they defy us."

With such hubris infecting the Clinton administration, it should come as no surprise that it has so badly bungled policy concerning the Serbian province of Kosovo. The administration set its sights on going to war with Yugoslavia and occupying the province. This is misguided in the extreme.

The administration is attempting to impose an artificial settlement with little chance of genuine acceptance by either side. It is micromanaging a guerrilla conflict, likely spreading nationalistic violence throughout the region. It is involving America in an undeclared war against a nation which has not threatened the United States or any American ally. It is encouraging permanent European dependence on America to defend European interests with little relevance to America. Most importantly, it puts American troops at risk without any serious, let alone vital, American interest at stake.

The situation in Kosovo is tragic, but it is not unique. Washington unreservedly supports Britain, Spain, and Turkey, for instance, in dealing with violent separatists, has placed no pressure on Macedonia to offer autonomy to its ethnic Albanians, and ignores mass violence most everywhere else around the globe, from Burundi to Rwanda to Tajikistan. At least twice as many people died in January in Sierra Leone as in Kosovo last year, and as many people died in one three-day battle between Tamil guerrillas and the Sri Lankan government last fall as in Kosovo in all of 1998.

While Slobodan Milosevic is a demagogic thug, the one constant of guerrilla insurgencies and civil wars is their brutality—by both sides. If the Serbian government has caused civilian casualties in Kosovo, its conduct does not exist in a vacuum. Last June, an American diplomat in Belgrade told me: "If you're a Serb, hell yes the KLA is a terrorist organization." Even ethnic Albanians admit that the Kosovo Liberation Army has targeted Serb policemen and other government employees, as well as Albanian "collaborators" and Serbs viewed as abusing Albanians. Each cycle of violence has spawned another.

In practice, Washington seems prepared to use military force under three conditions: Those being killed are white Europeans; the perceived aggressor is not a U.S. ally; there is extensive media coverage of the conflict.

This makes a mockery of the humanitarian pretensions of President Clinton and other Western leaders. If our concerns are humanitarian, why is the administration ignoring the brutal civil war in Turkey, where some 37,000 have died over the last decade as the Kurds seek the right of self-determination? The Turkish government has destroyed Kurdish villages and ruthlessly restricts the civil liberties and political freedoms of Kurdish sympathizers. Yet the administration has voiced no outrage, proposed no bombing, demanded no occupation. To the contrary, Washington supplies the weapons Ankara uses to repress Kurdish separatists and apparently helped Turkey capture rebel head Abdullah Ocalan. There is much to criticize about Ocalan's PKK, of course, but one could make similar judgments regarding the KLA.

The administration appears to be driven by what former British diplomat Jonathan Clarke has termed the "instinct for the capillary." Developments in China and Russia will have a significant impact on shaping the future world order. The United States remains at risk of being sucked into a war on the Korean peninsula. American economic prosperity could fade if Japan's economy collapsed. All of these issues deserve the administration's focused attention. A Balkan civil war does not.

The experience in Bosnia, a nation which exists only in the imagination of Western officials, should serve as a caution. Bosnia "animates our policy towards Kosovo," Nicholas Burns, U.S. ambassador to Greece, told me during a recent trip to Athens. Burns said that the Clinton administration "learned a very bitter lesson in the Bosnian war, that if diplomacy is not often coupled by the threat of force or the willingness to use force in an unstable environment like this, diplomacy is often ineffective."

Though the United States has spent $12 billion and occupied Bosnia for more than three years, the Dayton Accord is a bust. As the Cato Institute's Gary Dempsey puts it, "Reintegration is grinding to a halt." Nationalists dominate politics, and refugees are not returning home; there is little homegrown eco-

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nomic growth.

There is also little local support for this "country" in which the U.N.'s High Representative, Carlos Westendorp, has chosen the currency and the flag, and has even dismissed the elected president. There is no end in sight for an American troop mission which was originally supposed to last just a year.

Intervention in Kosovo is even more perverse. Not only does the West have no answer—its autonomy proposal satisfies no one and will be enforced only through yet another interminable occupation—but the two sides are not ready to quit fighting.

The administration's unprincipled humanitarianism perversely encourages intensification of the fighting. Ethnic Albanian leaders understand the importance of positive media coverage. Dr. Alush Gashi, an advisor to Kosovo Albanian leader Ibrahim Rugova, admitted to me last June that the prospect of NATO intervention "depends on how we look on CNN. People need to see victims in their living rooms." The Albanian diaspora also recognizes the importance of political lobbying. Thus, instances such as the "massacre" in Racak, which appear to be the ugly but normal violence surrounding insurgencies (the U.S. government committed far worse in suppressing Filipino independence a century ago), are manipulated by foreign parties and domestic interests for policy ends—in this case, American intervention.

The administration obviously believes that NATO can push Yugoslavia hard enough to force autonomy, without pushing so hard as to yield independence for Kosovo. This is an illusion. If the United States largely eliminates Serbian authority within Kosovo and creates a military shield for slow-motion Albanian secession, the result is likely to be increased pressure for not only an independent Kosova, but a larger Albania, incorporating Kosovo, the nation of Albania, western Macedonia, and perhaps much more.

When I visited Kosovo last June, I did not find a single ethnic Albanian interested in autonomy. Although many were cautious when discussing the possibility of a greater Albania—obviously the question arises, which group would end up in charge?—they freely criticized Macedonia's treatment of its Albanian minority. And virtually every television satellite dish was turned toward Tirana.

The KLA has made its agenda clear. Last year, spokesman Jakup Krasniqi said his organization was "fighting for the liberation of all occupied Albanian territories," including the western section of Macedonia, whose population is one-fourth Albanian, "and their unification with Albania." Many residents of Albania, from which KLA recruits and supplies are flowing into Kosovo, and much of the international Albanian diaspora, from which financial support comes, also support this wider agenda. Indeed, the Albanian American Civic League (founded in 1989 by former New York Congressman Joseph DioGuardi) includes on its website (*www.aacl.com*) a map showing a Greater Albania which includes Kosovo, western Macedonia (along with its capital, Skopje), southeastern Montenegro (along with its capital, Podgorica), northern Greece, and southern Serbia (north of Kosovo). It is a breathtaking agenda.

While the KLA may have signed on the administration's dotted line in Paris, that doesn't mean any, let alone all, of its different factions have changed their ultimate objective. Even the moderate Kosovo political leadership is unlikely to accept autonomy, whatever the formalities of any agreement. During my visit last June, Dr. Gashi told me that "independence is inevitable." Implementation of the Rambouillet agreement would merely become a new starting point for the struggle for Albanian independence.

For this reason, Greece, the nation closest to the conflict, is extremely uncomfortable over NATO intervention. In private meetings during a recent trip to Athens (which preceded March's bombing), I found that officials at every level went out of their way to emphasize their opposition to Western military intervention. One top foreign ministry official complained that "if force was [sic] used it would have spillover consequences for us." Such concerns are also voiced outside of government, by members of the conservative New Democracy party, academics, businessmen, and journalists.

A former diplomat and conservative member of parliament, Petros Molyviatis, says the important thing is "not to allow the change of external frontiers. If we do, it could blow up the Balkans." Unfortunately, the administration's plan makes this more, rather than less, likely. The United States is aiding the very group most likely to spread instability southward into Macedonia and Greece. Milosevic is a brute, but he is no Hitler; his ambitions are limited to his own country's province of Kosovo. Those of the KLA are not.

Traditionally, war has been thought to be a tool of last resort. But this administration has implemented the most militaristic program in at least two decades. President Clinton might have some justification for his many interventions if he could point to some successes. But U.S. policy has consistently failed. Somalia was a disaster, reconciliation is a fantasy in Bosnia, Haiti now enjoys a presidential instead of a military dictatorship, Iraq remains recalcitrant, and U.S. threats have changed nothing in Kosovo.

More fundamental, however, is the principle. What is the standard for making war? What justifies the extreme step of unleashing death and destruction on another people? In the past, it has been a military threat against the United States or an ally. Yet Yugoslavia has done nothing against America or any of its allies. Let us grant that Serbian treatment of Kosovo's ethnic Albanians has been atrocious: so has the behavior of two-score other governments in a variety of conflicts around the globe. Is war the right remedy in these cases?

There are other considerations as well. By leading NATO into a campaign against the Serbs, the U.S. government is encouraging permanent European dependence on America to defend European interests. NATO was created a half-century ago to provide a defense shield behind which the Europeans could rebuild. The alliance was never intended to provide a permanent subsidy, especially one to populous and prosperous states, after the opposing hegemonic threat had disappeared. Dean Acheson assured Congress that Washington's troop presence would be only temporary, intended to protect the war-torn nations until they could stand on their own. In 1951, Dwight D. Eisenhower, NATO's first supreme commander, argued that the United States should "set clear limits" on the length of time it would maintain forces in Europe. A decade later, he warned: "Permanent troop establishments abroad" will "discourage the development of the necessary military strength Western European countries should provide for themselves."

In a European conflict such as this

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one, America should set the Europeans free to make their own decisions and bear the resulting consequences. Let the members of the European Union, with a combined GDP of eight trillion dollars, population of nearly 400 million, and armed forces of more than one million, sort out the problems of the Balkans if they believe doing so to be worth the cost.

While Yugoslavia obviously poses no direct threat to the United States or any ally, President Clinton has argued that there are indirect dangers: Failing to act risks another continental, if not global, conflict. Contended former German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel: "Everything must be done to insure that another awful conflagration does not explode in Europe."

This was, of course, the same argument used for Western intervention in Bosnia. Yet the Yugoslavian civil war, running from Slovenia through Bosnia, lasted longer than World War I without expanding beyond Yugoslavia. The lesson is obvious: It is better for surrounding states to remain aloof rather than to intervene in ethnic strife, thereby building firebreaks rather than transmission belts for war. It is a paranoid fantasy to imagine Serbia alone inaugurating such a conflict. Serbian legions will not be marching on Ankara, Athens, or Tirana, let alone Berlin, Moscow, or Paris.

Only if other states join in could the war become a serious one—yet even if the conflict in Kosovo spilled over into Albania and Macedonia, no major power would join the conflict. The worst case would be a Greco-Turkish war, but both countries have made clear both privately and publicly that neither is interested in intervening in the Balkans. In fact, Ankara and Athens are far more likely to exchange blows over the Aegean islands, Cyprus, or territorial sea claims.

The most important point, however, is that any resulting instability is a European, not an American, problem. The United States has a vital interest in preventing a hostile hegemonic power from dominating Europe. Washington does not have even a minor interest in preventing Europe from having to deal with the Balkan conflict left over from the Cold War. Instability on the periphery of Europe has other consequences—economic and cultural, for instance—but they are minimal, and to paraphrase German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, the Balkans are not worth the bones of a single healthy American rifleman.

Doug Bandow is a senior fellow at the Cato Institute and a former special assistant to President Reagan. This article is adapted from his testimony before the United States House of Representatives International Relations Committee on March 10, 1999.

RELIGION

Pitirim Sorokin: A Prophet of Our Present

by Harold O.J. Brown

The desire to know what tomorrow will bring, to know the future, is as old as the human race itself. But how? Who among us has the "gift of prophecy"? The book of history might seem to offer guidance, but human expectations and prognostications often mislead. When the most brilliant generals, industrialists, scientists, and politicians of Nazi Germany planned for World War II, it was not their intention or expectation that all of them should end up either dead, under arrest as war criminals, or in bitter exile, with Germany conquered and overrun, split into four "zones," her industry in ruins, and millions dead, maimed, and expelled from their homes. When the "best and the brightest" of the United States ruling establishment decided to intervene militarily in Vietnam, it was not their intention or expectation to end with 50,000 young Americans dead, their political leaders in disgrace, the economy in recession, and the nation they sought to protect completely overrun by its adversaries. When the Trojans decided to pull down their walls to admit the "votive offering" horse into their city, they did not expect it to end with the city burned, the men killed, the women and children in slavery. What can we expect? If we cannot see what lies ahead, how can we tell which turning of the road to take?

Can the past be our guide? He who does not know history, it is said, is destined to repeat its mistakes. But what can one who *does* know history do to help us *avoid* repeating them? Much indeed, if we have the wisdom to listen and the courage to act. What is so often missing is the combination of incredibly thorough data-gathering and genuinely prophetic insight that characterized the work of Professor Pitirim Sorokin. Today, as we stand almost at the end of the second millennium, it will be instructive to look once more at what he thought and wrote concerning the shape of things to come.

Let me tell you how I discovered the prophetic gift, if we may call it that, of this great thinker. In 1941, as the European war was under way but before it engulfed Russia and the United States, the expatriate Russian scholar Pitirim A. Sorokin (1889-1968) accurately predicted not the outcome of the world conflict that was brewing, but the world culture of half a century later, in a lecture series which became a little book called *The Crisis of Our Age*. I bought this book in 1956, when I first saw it. Professor Sorokin, whom I had heard speak but did not know, had a formidable reputation, and I bought his little book thinking that it would be quite "up to date." When I saw the publication date, I was disillusioned, as it seemed to me that something 15 years old would be obsolete. I am not sure that I read it, but I put it into my bookcase. In 1991, 50 years after its original publication, it fell out of my bookshelf as I was looking for some light reading while recovering from pneumonia. I read it in bed, amazed at the incredible accuracy with which the old professor described the beginning 1990's.

Before proceeding to discuss his predictive skills, let us think for a moment about the original meaning of "prophet." In the Old Testament, a prophet was not necessarily a predictor of the future, and certainly never merely one. A priest addressed himself to God on behalf of the people; a prophet addressed the people on behalf of God, bringing "the word of the Lord." It is a simple matter to show that Professor Sorokin had a gift for foretelling future developments, but others do that too, although seldom so well as he. What I would like to propose to you is this: There is at least a trace of prophecy of the biblical type in Sorokin. The words of the Hebrew prophet Micah—"He hath showed thee, O man, what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee" (Micah 6:8)—apply to Sorokin, as

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he warns of the *dies irae* and prays for the grace of understanding.

But to return to territory more familiar to the sociologist and the historian, namely, the course of worldly events: With hardly an exception, Professor Sorokin's detailed predictions of the direction our society would take in the remainder of the century have turned out to be almost completely accurate. The accuracy with which he made short-term predictions of things that have now actually taken place far outstrips that of most other prognosticators, many of whom find their prophecies disproved only a few years after they were made.

What most attempts to predict the future have in common—besides their inaccuracy—is a pronounced pessimism. Examples abound. Aldous Huxley (*Brave New World*) and George Orwell (*Nineteen Eighty-Four*) predict a terribly bleak and dismal future for mankind. Paul Ehrlich, with *The Population Bomb*, and the "Club of Rome," with *The Limits of Growth*, predict an increasingly crowded world with growing poverty, loss of freedom, and hopelessness. Demographer Pierre Chaunu predicts exactly the opposite of Paul Ehrlich, namely, that the world's population will go into decline and that the entire human race will die out sometime around the year 2500—a different line of reasoning, but the same sense of inevitable disaster. As Austrian sociologist Hans Millendorfer observes, what all of the futurologists think is needed, and what we do not have, is a different kind of man from the kind of humans that we seem to be.

These bleak and hopeless visions are also spread by some of the great philosophers of history, such as Arnold Toynbee (*A Study of History*) and, the most famous of all (although not many have actually read his complex and difficult work), Oswald Spengler (*The Decline of the West*). Spengler, and to some extent Toynbee, looked on societies as living organisms and believed that each society passes through stages from birth through growth, youth, maturity, old age, decrepitude, and ultimately death. Both of these writers, like many others, see our own society, especially Western Christendom, in a late stage, either totally decrepit or nearly so. Consequently, they issue gloomy prognostications or at best present utopian visions of what the future could be if only . . . if only we were not the kind of human beings that we are.

Even scholars (and dabblers) in biblical prophecy usually focus on visions of the "Great Tribulation" that is to precede the "End of the Age" rather than on the attractive features of the Kingdom of God where the lion is to lie down with the lamb. Pessimism has become the rule whenever people speculate about the future today, whether they do so on the basis of secular data or biblical interpretation. From science fiction writers to excited Christian interpreters of the Apocalypse of St. John, the general attitude can be summed up by those words of Louis XV, "*Après moi, le deluge.*"

Yet at the close of this 20th century, many nations and peoples ought to have much to make them happy. Those in the West are awash in material benefits. There seems to be hardly any danger of a major war. Entertainment is available virtually everywhere at the touch of a TV remote or VCR button. Never have so many young people (and, increasingly, the middle-aged and older as well) enjoyed the "advantages" of higher education. Restraints on personal behavior, even in public, have all but vanished in many places. Yet none of this seems to make people either happy or confident. The age of the greatest human "liberation," of anti-authoritarian education and complete sexual freedom, is not characterized by optimism and hope for the future, but by a sense that the conditions of life will probably continue to deteriorate.

This dramatic loss of confidence, of hope for the future, is typical of the kind of culture that prevails across most of the world today. With respect to what ought to be humanity's "fine arts," Sorokin wrote in 1941, "Contemporary art is primarily a museum of social and cultural pathology . . . operating mainly on the level of the social sewers. If we are forced to accept it as a faithful representation of human society, then man and his culture must certainly forfeit our respect and admiration." In art, in sports, in building, in merchandising, we are in an era of colossalism. Big is good, bigger is better. Religion and education are in the grip of what Sorokin calls "chaotic syncretism." We have a crisis in law, a crisis in systems of truth. His work preceded the rise of what is called "postmodernism," but that movement corresponds exactly to his predictions.

For our contemporary society, there is a danger that, after all these bleak prophecies have been fulfilled, there is worse to come. People who are convinced that their prospects are hopeless and that their best efforts will ultimately prove to be in vain will not be inclined to make much of an effort to forestall such a future.

In order to break out of the pessimistic mold that our problems are beyond us, it is necessary to step back behind the current phase of our own particular culture, to understand it, and to see where it is situated on the great canvas of human history. We should be delighted to encounter someone who, having lived through two world wars and a bloody revolution in this bloodiest of all centuries, tells us that a fiery *dies irae* is not predestined. Sorokin is fully aware of the danger of a culture-wide catastrophe—a catastrophe that was incipient when he wrote and which has now almost overtaken us—but he nevertheless challenges us to hope. This does not have to be our fate.

Dramatic improvements may even be *probable*, provided we understand the present situation well enough not to waste our energy in minor improvements and temporary expedients, and are given the discernment to see and to follow the right road out of the impasse of our late second millennium culture. In order to avoid catastrophe and to fulfill what Sorokin calls "man's unique creative mission on this planet," a real understanding of the crisis is necessary, and to that he helps us. But more is required: a measure of grace, and grace is not something that we can manipulate or generate on our own; it must come from God.

No one man's work, nor the work of any group or even of whole societies, is sufficient in itself to solve our system-wide crisis of the greatest magnitude. But Sorokin has helped us to see what the crisis really is and not be paralyzed by the awful vision, but inspired to search for ways to resolve it. We do not see it yet, but if Sorokin's hope is even partly as reliable as his analysis and prognosis, there is reason to take heart. Let me conclude, as he does, *Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini*!

Harold O.J. Brown is religion editor for Chronicles *and a professor of theology and philosophy at Reformed Theological Seminary in Charlotte, North Carolina.* *This article is adapted from a lecture delivered at an international symposium on Pitirim Sorokin held in Moscow and St. Petersburg in February.*

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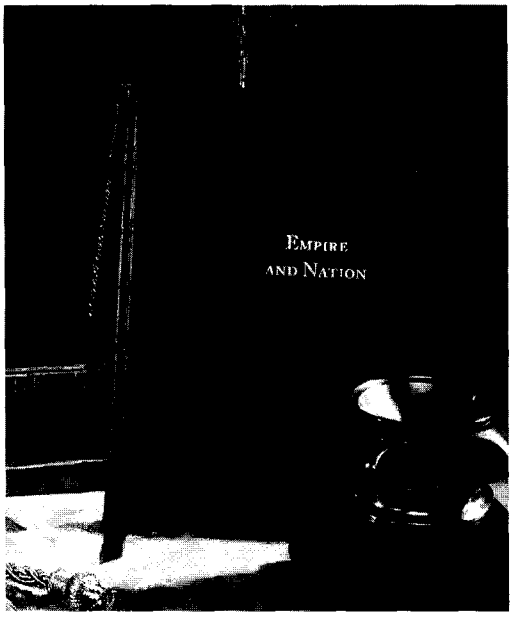

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Forrest McDonald is Professor of History at the University of Alabama and author also of ***E Pluribus Unum,*** among other works.

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